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MEMOIR

OF

MARY CAPPER,

LATE OF BIRMINGHAM,

A MINISTER OF THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS.

"Abridged from
the volume edited by
Katharine Backhouse.
London. 1847."

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THE following MEMOIR OF MARY CAPPER has been abridged from the volume edited by KATHERINE BACKHOUSE, of Darlington, and published in London in 1847.

MEMOIR

OF

MARY CAPPER.

CHAPTER I.

PARENTAGE — EDUCATION, ETC.

AMONG the various means by which, under the blessing of Divine Providence, individuals are instructed in the way of truth and righteousness, the biography of persons eminent for the simplicity and purity of their character, and for their faithfulness in the Christian life and hope, will ever stand prominent. Of such was Mary Capper, who was born on the 11th of the 4th month, 1755.

She was the daughter of William and Rebecca Capper, of Rugely, in Staffordshire, England. Her parents were conscientiously attached to the Episcopal Church, and brought up their numerous family as members of it.

She possessed talents of no ordinary kind; energetic and contemplative, she seemed peculiarly pre-

pared, as Divine Grace was allowed to operate on her gifted mind, to throw aside the prejudices of education, and to stem the torrent of opposing opinion. Her susceptible heart was, however, keenly alive to the sorrows of others, and deep were her sufferings when, for a time, her religious views broke the harmony of the domestic circle; but having taken up the cross of Christ, she was mercifully enabled to follow her Lord in simple obedience, and in full reliance upon His power to preserve and strengthen her through every trial.

Much of the account of her childhood was penned after she had attained the age of eighty years; and a more lively description cannot be given to the reader than in her own words. "My dear parents," she writes, "accustomed their children to read the Scriptures. The religious instruction of my childhood was, I think, received from my dear mother. O! she was a deeply tried, Christian mother.

I think it was about my tenth year that I was sent to my Aunt Langford, at Macclesfield, in Cheshire. She was a serious member of the National Establishment, a very respectable widowed gentlewoman. Under her kind care, I was instructed in the strict observance of religious forms; to remember the text of every sermon that I heard; to write the Collects, etc.; but I do not remember much serious im-

pression being made on my mind. About this time, there was a great talk about Methodism. Our relations, the Rows, of Macclesfield, were said to have turned Methodists, and were lightly spoken of and ridiculed. I well remember that I felt sorry for this; because I thought, if they were good people, and only differed from others in the way that they thought was right, they ought to be loved.

I was allowed to go with my young companions to the theatre, and various other places of amusement; and I do not recollect that any remark was made, upon time being thus squandered and mis-spent."

In adverting to these days, M. C. writes: "I was, at times, and many times, in early life, very thoughtful as to the genuine effect of religion on the mind. My constitution was weak, which I have considered one among other favors; for my nature was volatile, and I was much left as to outward restraints; and, indeed, urged to go to public amusements, plays, dances, etc., which were considered innocent. The first contrary impression that I distinctly remember was once, whilst on my knees, at my accustomed evening prayers; my thoughts being confused and dissipated, I lay down comfortless, believing that whatever distracted and hindered prayer must be wrong. This impression rested with me; and from time to time led to deep reflection, and secret con-

flict. The witness for truth left me not; and as little sacrifices, such as declining gay parties, seemed to yield a peaceful calm, I was favored with resolution to persevere. One occasion I think I cannot forget, because it is sealed by mercy and by experience to this day; though the thing was, in itself, comparatively little, and I was then young. Being tempted to take some fruit, in a garden where I was unobserved, and being on the point of gathering it, a sudden check arrested me. I cannot distinctly describe it, but I walked from the spot with a sweetness of inward peace indescribable, such as I think I had never before known; and it arose in my heart, and has remained in my understanding, this is the teaching of the grace of God; or, in other words, of the Holy Spirit! This, we had been taught to believe, would enable us to overcome evil; but it is not sufficiently understood; and when gently developed in the still, small voice, it is frequently not obeyed; and the quick sense of its secret monitions becomes less discernible.

External objects, and the too general example of Christian professors, entangle and allure the mind; the doctrine of the Cross of Christ, or the self-denial thereby taught, is rarely brought into view; or, possibly, little understood, farther than as regards strictly moral conduct, and a due observance of religious in-

stitutes. This I write, not uncharitably, nor by way of censure. I was favored with a sense of good, under such restraints as these, before I underwent the ceremony of confirmation; and for several years after this, during many little fluctuations in the domestic arrangements, I continued serious, and given to retirement. O! how would the enemy of all good sometimes come in like a flood, and almost terrify me with evil thoughts and suggestions. It would be vain to attempt setting forth the hidden striving of nature with the light which manifests the evil, separating the precious from the vile. I was not obstinately rebellious, though my temper was naturally hasty and impatient. On some occasions, my brother James was a gentle reprover, and was, in example, kind. In after years, he became my advocate, as a Christian brother; for he believed me sincere, though his religious views were not in accordance with mine.

My brother John married and settled at Rugeley, after which event the rest of the family went to reside at Birmingham with our parents."

This brings us to a new era in the domestic circle, to which M. C. makes some allusion in mentioning the change which afterwards took place in her religious views; and as this change of view and practice first became obvious in her brother Jasper, a few

particulars relating to him may here be acceptable to the reader, and useful, as a connecting link in the history of M. C.

He was about four years older than she was, and tenderly attached to her. When quite young, he was sensible of the quickening influence of the Holy Spirit visiting his soul, and it became his practice reverently to read a portion of the Holy Scriptures before he left his room in a morning. On these occasions he frequently sat for a time in silence, in order to wait upon Him, who, he felt persuaded, alone could open the sacred writings to his understanding. While a young man, he accompanied his brother James (who was about to take orders as a clergyman) to London; and during their stay there, they called upon Mary Knowles, who was an acquaintance of the family. On being informed of James's prospects, she gave them a description of the qualifications which she deemed essential to a true minister of the gospel. This address, while it produced little effect upon the mind of James, sank deeply into that of Jasper, and he was, in consequence, induced to go to a Friends' meeting. Farther reflection, inquiry and conviction were the means of attracting him very closely to this religious society; but he had much suffering to pass through, in various ways, before he became a member of it.

His parents, who appear scarcely to have considered the Society of Friends to be Christians, from partaking in an ignorance of their principles which was then very prevalent, were, of course, much opposed to his being united to such a body; and his father treated him with a severity which was cause of great sorrow to his affectionate heart; yet he was enabled to continue firm in what he saw to be required of him. He obtained some employment in London, where he was kindly noticed by a few Friends; and the house of John Fry, in Whitechapel, was always open to him.

One day, while he was in much distress, on account of his father's objecting to assist, or even to see him, he went to J. Fry's, and found several Friends assembled, among whom was Barbara Drewry, who was engaged in religious testimony. He quietly took his seat near the door of the room; when, without knowing anything of his situation, she addressed him very remarkably; expressing her apprehension that he was under great conflict respecting some requiring of duty, and her full belief that, if he became obedient to the will of the Lord therein, though he might be called upon to give up all that was most dear to him, and every prospect of outward advantage, yet the Lord would abundantly recompense him, and would ultimately bless him, not only with

spiritual, but with temporal increase. This proved to him like a brook by the way, and contributed to strengthen his resolution to make a surrender of his all to Divine disposal. Being fully convinced of the necessity of a truly religious life, he soon became sensible of a sincere desire for the best welfare of his dear connexions, and he ventured to write to his sister Mary, endeavoring to awaken in her mind a serious concern for her eternal salvation. This letter, however, failed in producing the effect designed, and he received from his sister an answer which was very unsatisfactory to him. The following is extracted from his reply to it:—

"To M. Capper, Birmingham.

London, 28*th September*, 1776.

Dear Sister:—It is not my intention to enter into a religious controversy, or to persuade you or any one (for I have not myself been persuaded) into errors of judgment, if, as you say, I have blindly and enthusiastically fallen into them; but, on the contrary, would gladly acknowledge my weakness, and be thankful to be set right. I desire to ask you this question: By what standard did you examine my letter? Not by the doctrine of our Saviour and his apostles, I am convinced, or you could not have accused me of enthusiasm; for, as I understand the

word, enthusiasm is a mistaken zeal; but, where zeal is directed by truths handed down to us for our direction, it cannot be too fervent. Our misfortune is, we cannot always maintain such a zeal. If you call it a fit, because it is a frame of mind which I am likely to fall from, I agree to it; but this is owing to my own weakness, and for want of steadfast faith and trust in Him who would support me; but to prove that I was, at the time of writing to you, under proper impressions, could I constantly maintain them, they would not only warm my heart with a continual sense of the gratitude due to my Redeemer, but render it impossible for me to do any one an injury, or fall into the least sin. Ought, then, these impressions to be stifled? or ought we not rather to press after them?

If I remember right, I addressed myself to your heart before, but you have answered me in haste, and I am sensible never asked your poor heart one question about it; but in the strength of your own reason you have confided, and I will endeavor to prove that you have trusted to a broken reed; therefore answer me a question, and if your heart does not give it the negative, then ask yourself, if you do not deny your Redeemer, by making the Gospel of none effect. Did your heart assent to this assertion in your letter? viz., that you 'look upon a sincere,

humble and uniform adherence to the rules of moral duties as the substance of our faith and doctrine.' Surely not! for this excludes Christianity; as it is possible to be a strict moralist, without one grain of true religion; for many of the heathens were so, and even atheists may be so.

Our blessed Saviour himself condemned the Scribes and Pharisees, who were strictly moral; they carried themselves uprightly as to their moral characters, and were looked upon by the world as the best of men; they fasted twice in the week, and were not (as one of them said) extortioners, unjust, etc., and they gave tithes of all that they possessed; yet what does the Lord, who knew their hearts, call them? Hypocrites, who prayed to God with their lips, but whose hearts were far from Him!

How is it frequently with us? are not you and I like unto them?

If I have advanced anything in my letter which is unscriptural, point it out to me; if not, how is it enthusiasm?

If we believe that we 'must one day give an account for every idle word;' and that, 'whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, we must do all for the glory of God' (which we must believe, or deny our professed faith), can we watch too narrowly over ourselves? or endeavor, too carefully, to avoid what

may tend in the least to alienate our affections from the things which are above?

'To enjoy is to obey.' Was our Saviour sent upon earth as a pattern for us? Did He enjoy the good things of this life in the manner you speak of? We are told to use the things of this life so as not to abuse them, but never to rejoice in them, that I remember. When the Apostles were beaten, and departed from the presence of the council rejoicing, was it enjoying the good things of this life? No! it was rejoicing in the Lord; and I believe, that to enjoy His presence, we must obey his leadings. Read the first chapter of John, and tell me what you can make of it without this belief. In the Epistle to the Corinthians, the ministers of God are spoken of 'as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing.' Were not these, think you, called by those who did not listen to them, a morose set of fellows? Yet, were they not enjoying and obeying? Thus it is with almost all religious people.

I shall not wish for quite so sudden an answer as to my last, but one more to the matter, and honestly produced by serious judgment; a little farther from the surface than your other. My intention was, not to accuse nor to dictate, but to warm you with a desire to inquire after these things.

In true brotherly love, being sensible of my own errors, from a very sinful neglect,

Your true friend and affectionate brother,

JASPER CAPPER."

No remark is preserved respecting the effect of this letter on Mary Capper's mind; but it appears to have induced her to reflect very seriously upon her own condition, and to make some inquiry into the faith and practice of the Society to which her brother had become so much attached. She was, at that time, in very delicate health, and her parents resolved (probably under the influence of various motives) to place her in a family in France, for a time.

On this account she was brought into new and trying circumstances; and it is thought that extracts from her journal, at that time, will not be without interest in many ways, especially to those in early life, who will see that she possessed a very lively imagination, and warm feelings; and who may, by the perusal, be the better prepared to appreciate the sacrifices which she had afterwards to make, in order to obtain peace of mind, and to become the humble disciple of a crucified Lord.

Her journal notes a short stay in London, prior to her leaving for the Continent, where she met with

Dr. and Mary Knowles. The interview was a very agreeable one, and she had much serious conversation with the Doctor, who, as she says, "was by profession a Quaker." The rational and improving mode in which the evening was spent contrasted forcibly, in her mind, with the trivial ways of killing time adopted by many of her acquaintance. "How far more praiseworthy," she remarks, "those are who spend their time in searching after and admiring the wonderful power and goodness of the Almighty, than such as think of little but the gratification of the senses, who scarcely know or consider how or wherefore this grand universe is supported, or whether governed by a Supreme, All-powerful Being!"

Accompanying some of her friends one evening to a place of public amusement, she observes the next day, in her diary —

October 24th. My brother Jasper called upon me; he was not pleased at my last night's expedition; in truth, I was vexed at myself. I could not help making a comparison between the different feelings with which I retired to rest last evening and the night before; one all hurry and confusion, without one rational idea; the other calm, serene and pleasing, with a train of ideas delightful, quiet and composed. I very joyfully performed my promise

of spending the day in Ingram Court, and it was as agreeable as I expected. The Doctor was at home all the afternoon, and we had much serious conversation, in which my heart was interested; the Doctor and his wife explained the benefit arising from silent meetings, which I am convinced must be very great; we are then freed from all external objects, and wait upon the Lord in silent submission, which must, doubtless, be a far more acceptable sacrifice than those forms of prayer that are repeated by the lips when the spirit is far from God. This silent meditation is certainly an excellent preparation for vocal prayer.

26*th*. Went, with my brother Jasper, to the Quakers' meeting, and was exceedingly pleased with one of the female preachers. There was silence nearly an hour and a half, in which time I was prepared to receive instruction, and I felt the force of what I heard. Returned to our lodgings well satisfied with silent worship.

31*st*. Poorly all day. M. Knowles was so obliging as to read in the life of William Penn, an eminent Quaker, who suffered much from persecution, being imprisoned and cruelly treated on account of his religious views and practices. He bore all with fortitude; supported by the true spirit of Christianity, he overcame all difficulties.

November 5th. Read part of the life of George Fox, and found myself interested in his sentiments, which appear to me noble, and full of weight. I quit these kind friends to-morrow.

CHAPTER II.

SOJOURN IN FRANCE.

On the 8th of 11th month, 1776, Mary Capper embarked for Boulogne. Two young female companions were going over, to be educated in one of the French convents, and she appears to have had a similar intention. The next day after landing, she says, "we attended our fellow-travellers to the Ursuline Convent, and delivered them into the hands of six nuns, who were dressed perfectly neat and plain. We were informed that the pensioners rise at five o'clock, all the year. To breakfast is not the custom of the country; but, at ten o'clock, they dine on soup, with a morsel of coarse beef boiled to strings. This is served in a manner by no means elegant. After this frugal repast, they are occupied in studies till five o'clock. Their supper is roasted meat, with a salad when the season permits. The hour of rest is seven. These particulars did not give my friend

and me any strong desire to join them; and what weighs still more with us is, that we should be under the necessity of submitting to all their customs and superstitions. They have mostly fifteen prayers each day, which would be a burden to those who do not imagine that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Returned to our Auberge, and gave up all thoughts of entering a convent."

14*th*. "Called on our friends in their prison, as it may justly be termed. We were only allowed to speak to them through an iron grate. Poor Powell appeared dissatisfied with her situation, though she was obliged to put on her best looks, and to say that she liked it very well, as the governess who was with them understands English. We returned to the inn by the ramparts, which command an extensive view of the sea, and of distant hills, woods and villages. I observed a large crucifix placed on an eminence in the middle of the town, and was informed that the people, on certain days, flock in great numbers, to offer their prayers before this figure. Surely this is a zealous blindness, which raises compassion in a thinking mind."

Through the attention of a person to whom her brother Jasper, who accompanied her, had letters of introduction, a home was obtained for her in a respectable family, by whom she was introduced into

many of the gaieties of fashionable French society. Card-playing appears to have been the chief mode of spending time, while receiving or paying evening visits, and was considered a necessary part of a polite education; but Mary Capper speaks of it as very irksome to her.

Placed, as she was, among worldly-minded people, devoted to amusements, it was expected that she would participate in them, when invited by the friends of her hostess; but she says, "I am, from experience, convinced that these noisy diversions intoxicate the mind, enfeeble it, and render it incapable of performing the duties for which we were born. I presume not to judge for others; but for myself, I find it necessary to guard against the tumultuous joys of the world."

February 16*th*, 1777. "Received a pleasing epistle from Mrs. Knowles, containing a few serious directions on the most important object of our lives. My heart melts with the earnestness of my desires to become one of those few that labor after the perfection of holiness."

26*th*. "Walked round the ramparts; the castle is an ancient pile of building, now made use of as a prison. Two or three rooms, which look upon the ramparts, are particularly reserved for the confinement of young gentlemen who are extravagant, or in

any way disobedient to their parents. Every father or mother has power to shut up their children for any time they may think proper; for life, if it is thought their crimes deserve it. One of the young officers that we saw on landing, is now in confinement here. His father is an officer, who has lost a considerable fortune by gaming. The son, having a tincture of the same propensity, was informed by his mother, that the first time she heard of his playing in a certain coffee-house, she would confine him in the chateau. Notwithstanding this, the young man followed his inclination, and his mother put her threat in force. I think two months is the time fixed for his punishment."

On one occasion, receiving an invitation to a ball and concert, and being unwell, she says, "I employed the time in reading Thomas à Kempis, and felt more satisfaction than I should have done in their splendid assembly."

March 11*th*. "Was exceedingly shocked to hear of the death of Madame Méricœur, a young lady whose wedding we saw not many weeks since. She was taken ill on Thursday, and died this morning, leaving a distressed husband and mother. Who that has any consideration would be so anxious after the happiness which is so uncertain! These daily instances of the instability of earthly joys should warn

us against a reliance on them. What a melancholy change in this family! the other day, all gay, and flattering themselves with the prospect of many succeeding years! Happy is the mind whose dependance is not upon the fluctuating joys of this world! who can contemplate all with the eye of a passenger that is seeking rest in another!"

April 26th. "Went with Madame Brunet to witness a ceremony that takes place during Lent, which they call Tenébres. I was quite alarmed at this strange performance. Just before the service finished, the candles which burn before the altar were put out, and the priests, with all the congregation, began to rap with their books and their feet, which made an inconceivable noise. I asked Madame for an explanation of this extraordinary scene, and she informed me that it was to remind them of the darkness and confusion which took place at the death of our Saviour!"

On another occasion she records: "Went with Madame to mass, a long and tedious ceremony. I believe they consider the bishop as a being of superior order. He walks to the church, surrounded by almost all the village, who join in singing psalms, etc. They say he is a man exemplary for his piety, charity, etc. I hope that all proceeds from a right spring. Education may so far have influenced his

mind, that the forms and ceremonies may to him appear necessary; but I must acknowledge that I beheld them with an emotion which I cannot describe. The bishop wears a large ring upon his little finger, which the priests kneel to kiss; the servants kneel when they present water to wash his hands. I was so much affected by these strange, and, as I thought, presumptuous ceremonies, that I could not restrain my tears; and how earnestly did I wish that all the world were acquainted with that gentle tranquillity which results from a humble waiting upon the Lord!"

Not long after occurs the following reflection, being upon the first day of the week: "Passed the morning alone. I pity those who are unacquainted with the sweet consolations resulting from serious meditation, and with that peace which the world cannot give nor take away."

Can we not plainly recognize here the secret operations of the Holy Spirit, enabling her to discern, amidst all the allurements of the world, and the imposing ceremonies of an attractive and sensual faith, that these things were opposed to the Truth as it is in Jesus — to that new and glorious dispensation, the distinguishing characteristic of whose worship is, that it must be performed in spirit and in truth?

Proceeding with our extracts, she records, soon after —

June 5th. "A pleasant walk, but I could not enjoy it. Objects appear gay or gloomy, according to the state of the mind."

7th. "After dinner the conversation turned on religion; they were very severe on me, and rallied me unmercifully, giving me the appellation of Quaker, or Trembler. Nothing could be more unjust than their censures of this people, whom they conclude to be unworthy of the name of Christian. I heard all with silent patience. After having listened for some time, I declared myself quite in favor of the real principles of Quakerism, and retired, leaving them to make what comments they pleased."

Among the many with whom Mary Capper was associated, in this gay and worldly circle, she met with one who, like herself, serious and thoughtful, was worthy of her friendship.

July 22d. "After dinner, sat down with Félicité Dupont* in her room, where she spends the greater part of her time, reading, writing and drawing, in which latter art she excels. We had much serious

* This amiable young woman was afterwards married to Brissot de Warville, who died under the guillotine during the Revolution in 1793. See sketch of his life in "Aikin's Biographical Dictionary."

conversation. I really feel myself strongly attached to her, as she seems to be free from that affectation and levity which are generally so apparent in French ladies. I think she has naturally a strong understanding, which has been improved by extensive reading."

24*th.* "Read French and English together. We reap pleasure and advantage from these reciprocal endeavors to instruct each other."

August 3*d.* "Spent a few quiet hours in my own room. Walked into the country, where we partook of a frugal repast at a farm-house, sitting upon hay, with a plank for our table. The clouds were remarkably beautiful, and I was disposed to enjoy the calm contemplation which the surrounding objects seemed to invite.

4*th.* "In the evening, Félicité and I took our book to the garden, and seated ourselves under a clump of trees. We stayed nearly two hours, and enjoyed a pleasing calm — all nature glowing around us. I could not but regret the folly which leads men to search for happiness in crowds, and in pompous parade, when real satisfaction may be purchased at so cheap a rate. As a flower unfolds in the genial warmth of the sun, the mind expands in serious meditation and reflection."

29*th.* "The palpitation at my heart returned

with great violence. The physician assures me that it is only the effect of the weak state to which I am reduced. I pass the night almost without sleep, and have very little appetite; therefore I cannot, at present, expect to regain my strength. I hope I am not impatient under these bodily afflictions; they are light, in comparison with a wounded spirit. I have that trust and confidence in my God which makes His will my delight. Though He afflict me, yet will I trust in Him; and while His grace supports me, I can, as it were, forget the present pain, and look joyfully forward to that glory which shall be revealed to those who persevere."

September 2d. "Much indisposed; but as it proved a delightful afternoon, my friend and I went in the cabriolet to the Bois de Boulogne, and reposed under the spreading branches of a fine old tree. As we generally take our books on these excursions, reading and conversation have their turn, and we enjoy many pleasing moments, untasted by those who are engaged in a continual round of more expensive luxuries. How greatly are we mistaken when we consider riches as the only happiness! The truly pious mind exults in well-grounded hope, and steadfastly fixes the eye of faith beyond the present scene."

4*th.* "Again visited the wood, and returned

about sunset, which afforded us many delightful views. They brought to my mind those beautiful lines, beginning, 'These are thy glorious works, Parent of Good!' It is impossible to contemplate the wonders of nature, without feeling the heart glow with gratitude to the great Author, whose goodness is but dimly seen in these His works."

16*th*. "Spent the morning chiefly in my own room; the extreme gaiety does not suit me. I feel like a stranger, indeed! I have no inclination to familiarize myself with this mode of life; it may do for others, but give me sobriety, with a mind disposed for reflection. A letter just received from my dear Jasper, informs me that he has some thoughts of coming here. I shall greatly rejoice to see him. I cannot but observe how ill-informed we English females find ourselves, in comparison with the French ladies; they appear perfectly acquainted with the rise and progress of all material events in the history, both of their own and other nations. This is certainly a part of education, not merely ornamental, which might well be substituted for more trivial acquisitions."

Soon after this time, Mary Capper returned to England, and says, respecting her beloved friend, "I really feel greatly at the thought of leaving her, it may be forever! Her tenderness and amiable dis-

position have gained my admiration and warm affection, and have greatly interested me in her future well doing."

The gradual change in her religious views was a subject of great concern to her parents. Her brother Jasper had become decidedly attached to the principles and practices of the Society of Friends, and Mary was strongly attracted to unite with them. Under these circumstances, Jasper had been sent to bring her back to England. While they were detained before sailing, they were in the practice of frequently retiring together, for the purpose of silently waiting upon the Lord, that they might know His will, and experience a renewal of their spiritual strength; and they were often comforted together on these occasions. She returned home on the 25th of the 10th month, 1777.

CHAPTER III.

RETURN HOME IN 1777, AND MEMORANDA DURING HER STAY THERE — REMOVAL TO WILMINGTON, AND JOURNAL WHILE THERE IN 1781 AND 1782 — RESIDENCE IN LONDON TILL 1788 — REMOVAL TO BIRMINGHAM — DEATH OF HER MOTHER IN 1793.

THE return of Mary Capper to the paternal dwelling was the occasion of much trial and difficulty both to herself and to her affectionate parents. She thus writes, respecting this interesting period of her life: "It was after my return from France that an obvious change took place in my manners, etc., so as to attract observation. The ceremonies of the church, when I attended with my parents and the family, affected me in a very unusual manner; I do not know that I can say painfully, but with a desire to act more conformably with what was preached. Sometimes I wept, and sometimes had to be taken out, nearly fainting, but could not describe my sensations. I had then no intention of making any change in my religious profession; but my dear mother's disappointment was keen, when, in process of time, I felt that I could not conform to what I had been taught

was necessary to salvation; and kept much retired, without attending any place of worship."

About the end of the year 1777, her brother Jasper joined the Society of Friends, and in 1778 he married Anne Fry, the daughter of John Fry, of Whitechapel. In regard to these important changes, his mother remarked that, if the thing were of the Lord, it would stand; if of man, it would come to naught.

Mary Capper appears to have made very few memoranda during her stay at home; but the few which have been preserved, and which are here presented, give proof of the continued seriousness of her mind, and of her desire, under a complication of difficulties and disadvantages, to follow on to know the Lord for herself.

September 8th, 1779.

If men are born merely to live, or rather breathe, a few short years, and then fall to nothing; if virtue is only a name, or a habit acquired by certain modes of education, why have we a secret, unconquerable knowledge of right and wrong? If it be possible to believe that annihilation takes place, after this span of pain and sorrow, we are of all creatures the most deplorable. Brutes have capacities to desire and enjoy, but man has a reasonable soul, which is not to be satisfied with sensual gratifications. How

vain! how weak is the human heart! Can a reflecting mind be ignorant of its own instability! Can the maxims of the most learned sophistry fortify us against the alluring poison of those temptations which surround us! Can speculation, or gratified passions, produce those calm, happy effects, which result from a firm dependence on a superior Power, who will reward our humble faith, or assuredly punish our arrogant pride! How amiable is the humble mind, which trusts not in its own strength, which is not above acknowledging its own weakness, and glories only in its hope and confidence in the living God!

March 12th, 1780.

"The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower!" O! who is like unto our God!

What am I, O! Lord, what am I, that thou shouldst so wonderfully extend thy love towards me! Of myself I am worse than nothing — all weakness and contradiction! One moment, fervent in desire — the next, cold and languid in the performance of the least of thy commands. O! woe is me; who shall deliver me from this body of treachery! The Lord himself! The mighty Lord who is my strength,

and my help in the time of need. He will graciously dart a ray of divine light into my soul; then shall I plainly perceive that He is the ancient of days, that was and is, and is to come; the sure Rock of defence to all that trust in Him.

How comfortable are the dawnings of divine grace! How encouraging are thy promises, my God! Let me rest in thy truth! Give me sure confidence in thy mercy! Suffer me not to dwell in darkness! O! turn not thy wrath upon her who is insufficient to bear thy displeasure! Let me not put any confidence in my own strength; for, Lord! thou knowest my impotence; the secret thoughts of my heart are not hidden from thee! How shall I stand, if thou leave me to my own guidance! but thou art wonderful in goodness, and I will trust in thy mercy. I have tasted of thy loving kindness, and my soul aspires to the fruition of joy, at thy right hand forever. Amen.

Soon after making these memorandums, and while in a state of much conflict of mind, Mary Capper was consigned by her parents to the care of her brother James. Concerning this event, she thus writes: "I went to Wilmington, in Sussex, my dear brother James being married, and fixed as rector there. His wife, who was a Biddulph, was an interesting,

intelligent, pious Christian, who had her own peculiar scruples of conscience, on various subjects; and very tender was my dear brother of her feelings on these points; so that the removal into his family was some relief to me. He affectionately inquired into my religious views, and sympathized in my distress.

I had sometimes secretly attended Friends' meetings, at Birmingham, in which I remember experiencing much brokenness of spirit; but while with my kind brother, I attended his little church. The private, as well as the more public devotion to which I was witness, wrought much consideration and deep inward thoughtfulness; especially as respected participating in what is termed the sacrament, or the Lord's supper, as it came in usual course to be administered by my brother. It had been, on former occasions, a solemn ceremony, of peculiar comfort to my longing soul; and I had much conflict and prayer that I might be satisfied whether the outward and visible sign was important to salvation. With reverence, deep humility and fear, I received the bread and wine. I do not recollect that any observation was made on my being evidently agitated. I sought no human counsel; but the satisfactory, abiding instruction on my own mind was, that the inward and spiritual grace, of which this was only the visible sign, must be something of a higher na-

ture, not dependent upon uncertain means. The best of teachers was pleased to calm and quiet my mind on this important subject, and I no more repeated the ceremony; but these convictions and changes were no light matters to me."

While resident at Wilmington, Mary Capper derived much enjoyment from the scenery of the surrounding country. She says: "I greatly admire the country; the views of the fine hills diffuse a calm, which induces sweet contemplation, and leads the mind to the Grand Source, whence flows every pleasant stream. The beautiful valleys are a delightful contrast, and attract particular admiration."

The pleasing music of the winds had its charms, and the air, fragrant with perfume. The early morning walk is thus described: "Had a charming walk before breakfast; the sun shone gloriously, and almost every spray was vocal with the song of joyous birds. Is it possible that the midnight dance, or tiresome frolic, should exhilarate the spirits, or afford the sweet, calm satisfaction which arises from the contemplation of nature! Surely, no! My soul now expands and breathes in silence for the only state fitted to enjoy perfect beauty!"

She prized also the privileges of friendly, social intercourse, enjoying its pleasures, as she says, "with

a mind at liberty, glad and confident in the living God."

Her opportunities for retirement and quiet reflection were precious to her. She frequently alludes to the time so spent. The following are some of the pious expressions recorded, at different times, in her journal: —

"In my closet, read Boyle. With a thankful spirit I have confidence in the living God; my soul resteth in his promises, and shall be satisfied. With hope and confidence I will wait the appointed time. Be steadfast, O! my soul, for the Lord regardeth the sincerity of thy desires; weak in thyself, be strong in faith, and fear not!"

"Retired with my mind disquieted. How many and various are the conflicts with busy passions! folly and vanity rise up daily, and gain strength from our too feeble resistance. My King, and my God! to thee I cry for strength. Humbled by a sense of my weakness, to whom can I apply but to the Fountain of Grace! Still I have faith in his bounty. My soul waiteth for the living God; and when He shall have purified me by His Spirit, all shall be peace and joy! Let none trust in their own strength, but let all praise and extol the Lord!"

"It will not be long ere the final end of all created things shall come. Watch, therefore! be

steadfast in prayer, always abounding in the work of the Lord."

"Forsake all, and thou shalt find all; leave thy inordinate desires, and thou shalt find rest. This is no easy task; self-will loudly plead her own cause; but as we keep low, and attend to the voice of Truth, there will be a forsaking of self, and a witnessing God to be all in all. There is a charm in the very dawnings of virtue, that irresistibly attracts our admiration, and leads sweetly on in the pursuit of true wisdom."

Her residence with this beloved brother appears to have been peculiarly grateful to Mary Capper. Although he adhered to the Episcopal Church, yet his Christian spirit enabled him to regard with tenderness those religious convictions which led her to dissent, and to pursue the path she believed to be the one appointed for her to walk in.

At the earnest solicitation of her brother William, she removed, in the 10th month, 1782, to reside with him in London.

In the sketch which Mary Capper subsequently gave of her early life, she remarks: —

"From the time that I went to live with my brother William, in London, I regularly attended Friends' meetings; not that I was acquainted with their peculiar religious views; indeed, there seemed

conduct with their own principles, I think they would not find that essential difference which a superficial view represents. I wish and really mean to act as a reasonable creature; redeemed, and born to newness of life, through the death, sufferings and resurrections of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; by whose intercession, and promised spiritual assistance, I am encouraged and strengthened to call, and wait upon the living God. If there is presumption and self-exaltation in this faith, I am utterly at a loss how to act; for I dare not trust in man, whose breath is in his nostrils. My hope and my confidence are alone in the Redeemer of his people.

No earthly satisfaction could equal that of being approved by my dear parents; but indeed, Rebecca, I cannot, cannot act contrary to what I believe tends to my advancement in faithful obedience to the law of God — the law which I find written in my own heart — for I believe, from that law shall a man be judged. When faithfully followed, it cannot, will not, lead him from the Supreme Good Every line in Holy Writ tends to strengthen or encourage our hopes, in humble confidence in the One only Good; opening our eyes to the folly of trifling amusements, and to the vain fashions of the world. Farewell, my dear Rebecca! believe me, I never was more affectionately your sister Mary.

parents! Oh! my sister, will you, can you despise me? I have no firm consolation but in the belief that I am guided by a superior Power. I have exerted every faculty of my mind; I have resolutely mortified my body, endeavoring to bring it into subjection, free from the influence of passion and deceiving sense; and I have a secret intimation that the kingdom of Heaven is within us; that in the silence of the creature is the power of God made known.

O! my Rebecca, if you would examine the uniform desire of my life, the earnestness of my supplications, and my present wish of being humble, pure, wholly dependent upon God my Maker, without any confidence in man; if you would thus consider me, without prejudice, I think you would not, could not, reject me! Of my own willings, or self abilities, I deserve little; but in my heart and understanding, I submit to a perfect Teacher; and in his Light is my life, and my hope. Think not, my Rebecca, that I have contracted ideas, which circumscribe salvation to any particular sect. God forbid! my heart is contrariwise enlarged in universal charity. Let each be satisfied in his own mind, and the censures or applauses of multitudes can only be a secondary consideration, of no weight.

Would my dear parents deliberately compare my

conduct with their own principles, I think they would not find that essential difference which a superficial view represents. I wish and really mean to act as a reasonable creature; redeemed, and born to newness of life, through the death, sufferings and resurrections of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; by whose intercession, and promised spiritual assistance, I am encouraged and strengthened to call, and wait upon the living God. If there is presumption and self-exaltation in this faith, I am utterly at a loss how to act; for I dare not trust in man, whose breath is in his nostrils. My hope and my confidence are alone in the Redeemer of his people.

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This letter appears to have been answered by her mother, who, under a conviction that the system of the Church of England was the nearest right, was disposed to form a most unfavorable opinion respecting the profession of a Society so entirely dissenting from its ceremonial performances and mode of worship. Under this, no doubt, honest conviction, she warmly remonstrates with her beloved daughter for leaving the Episcopal Church, and beseeches her to return. Her father also was deeply affected by his daughter's change of religious views, and was, at the time of her mother's affecting letter, confined by serious illness. This period of Mary Capper's life was seldom, if ever, alluded to by her without much emotion; but from this time, having become entirely settled in her convictions of duty to her Lord, she appears to have adopted decidedly the peculiar religious doctrines and testimonies of the Society of Friends.

The conflict was distressing; yet was she strengthened to persevere in what was clearly manifested to be the path of duty; and although her father recovered from that attack of illness, yet as he did not allow her to return home, and as his last illness was both sudden and short, she was deprived of the consolation of again seeing him, and of receiving from his own lips an assurance of his affection. It may

easily be conceived that this was indescribably trying to her; but she was enabled to lift up her heart, and to commit her cause unto Him, for whom she was thus forsaking her earthly home and parents; and He was pleased to speak peace to her afflicted soul, and in His own good time to grant her the hundredfold, even in this life. The following memoranda, and letter, will bear witness to the state of her mind at this period, and for some time after:—

LONDON, *6th of Ninth month*, 1783.

Praise the Lord, O! my soul, and be exceeding glad in the God of thy salvation; for He hath done great things for thee, and wonderful is His power! He hath plucked thy feet out of the mire and clay, and hath set them upon a rock — the only true foundation, throughout all ages, to the end of the world! My spirit is exceedingly glad that the Lord hath heard the prayers of His handmaiden, and in great mercy granted my earnest request. He hath strengthened me to part with all the nearest and dearest of his gifts; to sit loose from the tenderest connexions, that I may be free to fulfil the great command of loving the Lord my God, with all my heart, with all my mind, and with all my strength.

O! let none think the terms hard! our God is a God of infinite mercy; He is not a hard master,

reaping where He has not sown! My soul can testify of His bounty; and my desire, and my glory, is to adore, to praise, and to magnify His holy name! Amen! Amen!

24th of Fourth month, 1784.

There seems a state brought to the view of my mind, as being attainable even during our sojourn in this world — a state free from sin, when Christ shall dwell in us, and we in Him. The righteousness which He worketh in us must be perfect; every will and working of the creature being laid low, God shall reign over all, blessed forever! In this state of freedom from the dominion of sin, temptations and trials may, and assuredly will come; but as we keep close to the light of Christ, inwardly manifested, I believe we shall be preserved blameless, without spot or blemish, to the honor of our great and holy Teacher; to whom be ascribed power, majesty and praise, now and forever. Amen!

22d of Seventh month, 1784.

The ways of the Lord are wonderful, and past finding out. O! let none be weary of waiting upon Him, for He will be gracious to all those who faithfully call upon Him! My earnest cries have gone forth, and I believe the Lord hath heard the voice of my prayer. My groans and my tears have not

been hid from Him. Glory, praise and honor be to His name! Let the creature lie low, that the Creator may be all in all, forever and ever. Amen!

14th of Twelfth month, 1784.

O! how pure, how perfect is the Truth as it is in Jesus! Keep to it, O! my soul; turn neither to the right hand nor the left, but press forward, through all difficulties; for the light of Christ within thee will break forth into perfect day, if on thy part thou art steady, undaunted, and of a right faith! O! my God, help me! leave me not to the delusions, the buffetings of my soul's enemy! Keep me in the patience, that I may watch thy coming, and be found of thee. Thou art worthy to be waited upon, O! Lord, my God! in thee is my hope, and my trust forever!

As rest to the weary traveller, so is true silence to the deeply exercised mind.

M. C. TO W. B.

11th of Third month, 1785.

DEAR FRIEND:—With propriety I believe I may use the term, dear friend, as all in the Truth seem dear to me. Since our conversation this afternoon, I have had to remember, in a very lively manner, the Lord's dealings with my soul in early life.

I was at times visited with a sweet sense of purity and truth; but from my situation and mode of education, I was at a loss how to come at that which my soul seemed to see at a distance. For several years the prospect was, as it were, closed, or very rarely opened. I thought myself a useless being, and I believe sometimes almost repined that I was born; but about the twenty-third year of my age, the Lord graciously revisited my soul, and it was, indeed, as the dry and barren wilderness, refreshed with dew. I think I cannot forget the sweet incomes of divine favor. The whole creation seemed new to me; all things spoke the love and mercies of a gracious God. Scarcely a day passed over without some sweet openings, some renewal of my great Master's condescension. I thought myself the happiest of human creatures. Thus delectably did the God of all my mercies allure me into the wilderness! Every required sacrifice seemed ready prepared by His own hand, and I had only to wait His own time. Happy have I thought it, that He was pleased to stay my mind! When my dear, loved parents expressed their concern at my change, it was suggested to me, that, for a time, it was my place to be subject in all things lawful, and way would be made where I saw no way; and, far beyond my expectation, this has indeed been verified. But what seems more immedi-

ately to dwell upon my mind to communicate to thee is, that I have, in my measure, found that the Lord's merciful dealings stir up the envy and malice of our grand enemy, when our gracious Father is pleased to hide His countenance, and try our faith, after having sweetly led us in the right way. Then is the enemy as one triumphing over his prey. O! how is he permitted to buffet, to terrify the poor, timid soul! My mind has sometimes been as one almost without hope; and had not the hand of the Lord been underneath, I had surely fainted; but my spiritual eye was led to retrace the paths I had trod, and I was favored to see the Lord's dealings, and that tribulations were appointed to the faithful followers of a crucified Jesus.

With affectionate wishes for thy prosperity in the Truth,

I am, sincerely,

MARY CAPPER.

The following brief remark is among her memoranda:—

On the 2d of the Fourth month, 1785, my dear father died without my seeing him! I heard that he inquired with affection for a pair of garters which I had knit for him, and that he spoke with tenderness of me. O! this was like precious balm!

No special mention is made of a change in her mother's feelings towards her, but there is reason to believe that she gradually, from the time of her widowhood, became reconciled to her daughter's proceedings, being, doubtless, convinced of the rectitude of her motives; so that the way was at length made for Mary's return to the parental dwelling.

It appears that Mary Capper was received into membership with the Society of Friends about the year 1785; also, that she spoke as a minister in their religious meetings soon after that event. With respect to the latter circumstance, she writes: —

"It sometimes arose in my mind, that possibly I might have to tell unto others how I had been taught, and kept from the broad way of destruction; and a few words arising, with something of unusual power, I think at the Peel meeting, I stood up and spoke them, and felt very quiet; nor did I anticipate that such a thing might ever be required again; and thus I was led on, from time to time, not knowing but each time might be the last. About 1788, I came to reside with my dear mother, at Birmingham, and she did not object to my regularly attending Friends' meetings."

Though very little allusion to the circumstance is found in any of Mary Capper's papers, it seems scarcely right wholly to omit the mention of a yet

more costly sacrifice than any that she had previously made, which was called for at her hands, before she quitted London as her home. She had formed a strong attachment to a young man Friend, to whom she expected to be married, when she discovered that he did not set a high value on his membership in the Society of Friends, and that he was inclined for more liberty in practice than their principles allowed of. This was a most painful discovery to her; and as farther communication with him proved to her, that he was one who could not fully enter into her religious feelings and views, she felt it to be her duty to break off the connexion, though it nearly cost her her life; and she could never afterwards entertain the prospect of matrimony.

The following extract from a letter of her mother's will show how changed were her feelings towards Mary, and towards Jasper and his wife:—

BIRMINGHAM, *June 16th*, 1788.

MY DEAR MARY:—In answer to your last, I feel truly concerned that poor Smallwood* has fresh appearances of his disorder; and sorry I am at the disappointment which his parents must suffer. If necessary, I advise, by all means, that you should

* The eldest son of J. and A. Capper.

attend him; for whatever my own views may have been, I readily give them all up, for the good of this poor afflicted child, and the comfort of his father and mother, to whom give my most tender love.

With respect to the other proposal that your brother and sister have signified to you, I believe the bent of your own mind must determine you; this I verily believe, that the goodness of your own heart will incline you to undertake that which is the most needful for your friends.

I have only to add, that (wherever you may fix yourself for a time) whilst you remain single, I would have you to look upon my habitation, so long as I live, as your fixed and settled home. Thank your brother Jasper, in my name, for his attention to your Aunt Chase. Tibbatts* was here on Sunday; he says Rebecca is well. Believe me, dear Mary,

Your affectionate mother,

REBECCA CAPPER.

Mary Capper does not appear to have kept a journal regularly till after the death of her mother, but a few remarks were penned occasionally, and sometimes the petitions of an exercised soul. The following will, it is believed, be acceptable to the reader:

* The husband of her sister Rebecca.

evil; but the Lord of life and glory came down from heaven, from the bosom of his Father, to recover lost mankind, and throw consolatory hope into the cup of human woe—made a bitter cup by man's disobedience and pride.

Gracious, holy Father! open the blind eye! unstop the deaf ear! that we may see and acknowledge the mystery of thy condescending love!

Towards the end of the year 1793, Mary Capper appears to have been absent from Birmingham, attending upon a sick friend. During this period, she received the following letters from her mother:—

BIRMINGHAM 18*th September*, 1793.

MY DEAR MARY:—I hope they will not remove the young woman till the doctor thinks it may be done with safety. Don't be uneasy on my account. I continue tolerably well, when I am quiet; and what a blessing it is that I have it in my power to be so!

I am not so much alone as you may think, for my neighbors are kind in calling upon me. Your brother George dines with me most days, comes home in good time at night, and often looks in during the day.

Farewell, my dear Mary! I shall be truly glad to

that I may be healed; but Thou knowest all my thoughts, and the devices of my heart; therefore, with all my burden of infirmities, weakness and folly, I bow at the footstool of Thy mercy, and hope to be kept in patient humility, waiting Thy time to deliver me from my soul's enemies; for the power is Thine!

1791. At this period of my life, my faith is, that there is one God, who is supremely good, and doeth good continually; that at sundry times, and in divers manners, throughout all ages of the world, He has been pleased to manifest Himself to the sons and daughters of men; that in this our day, He shows Himself in the glorious dispensation of the gospel, having sent his own Son to be made flesh, and dwell among men for a time, in an earthly body.

Though mysterious His death and sufferings, I believe that Christ died to redeem us from sin; and that, in and through Him, believers have access to the Throne of Grace.

Eighth month, 1791. My faith being renewed in Christ Jesus, the Son and express image of the living God, I bow in humility and hope at the footstool of mercy, looking for redemption and remission of sin. O! the malady of the soul! how foul it is!

There is not, in nature, an antidote to so great

evil; but the Lord of life and glory came down from heaven, from the bosom of his Father, to recover lost mankind, and throw consolatory hope into the cup of human woe—made a bitter cup by man's disobedience and pride.

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I am not so much alone as you may think, for my neighbors are kind in calling upon me. Your brother George dines with me most days, comes home in good time at night, and often looks in during the day.

Farewell, my dear Mary! I shall be truly glad to

receive you, when it is proper for you to come home; but I am not impatient.

Believe me, your sincerely affectionate mother,

REBECCA CAPPER.

COLMORE ROW, 23*d September*, 1793.

MY DEAR MARY:—I am well pleased that you may leave Park Gate, with safety to your patient. W. Shorthouse tells me he intends setting out to-morrow to conduct you. He did intimate, some time ago, a thought of taking you to Liverpool; now, if circumstances coincide, I wish you to embrace the opportunity, as another may not offer. Don't hasten home at all on my account; I seem, at this moment, quite well. I was out only once yesterday, for the weather was rainy, and the wind very cold. I was very much gratified, and I hope edified, by a discourse on the words of St. James, "Let patience have her perfect work."

I am, dear Mary, your truly affectionate mother,

REBECCA CAPPER.

Rebecca Capper died in the Twelfth month, 1793; but no particulars are known of the illness that terminated her life, or of her closing moments.

CHAPTER IV.

ACKNOWLEDGED BY THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS AS A MINISTER — RELIGIOUS ENGAGEMENTS — VISITS AT STOKE NEWINGTON.

MARY CAPPER appears, from the time of her mother's decease, to have devoted herself to the service of her Divine Master, being a diligent attender of religious meetings, and travelling much to spread the knowledge of Truth and righteousness in various parts of England. She was acknowledged as a minister, in the early part of the year 1794. Her ministry was sound, and of a spiritual character. Having herself largely partaken of the conflict between flesh and spirit, she was often concerned to encourage the sincere-hearted patiently to submit to proving seasons, looking for effectual help to the light and power of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Fifth month, 21*st*. She thus writes: "Attended the meetings for worship in White Hart Court, to my refreshment and comfort. Mary Ridgway was particularly favored, on the words, 'Be still, and know that I am God!' I was inwardly made sensible of the great need there is to keep on the watch

in these large meetings. Oh! saith my soul, that we little ones may be preserved in the quiet, humble, silent, resigned state! Aware of the great importance of speaking in these assemblies, we should wait for that which burns as a fire that will hardly be restrained."

22*d.* "I believe some of us are tempted to think, that unless we appear to take some active part in Truth's service, we may be looked upon by others, and perhaps by ourselves, as useless, lifeless members; but far otherwise is my judgment at this time. The humble, patient traveller, who bears the burden of the word, until the right time comes for deliverance (when the message will be accompanied by a measure of power and authority), assuredly works essentially for the general good."

In the 8th month, 1794, in company with a beloved friend, Mary Beesley, she obtained a certificate to visit Friends in Wales. In the course of this engagement she says: "Friends receive us with much cordiality, making plentiful provision for refreshing the body; but ah! a few crumbs from our Master's table are still more desirable to us, for we are poor, and stripped of inward consolation; yet favored quietly to hope for a brighter season."

"We came to Penhow Castle, a good old farmhouse, where we were very hospitably received. The

mistress is a plain, agreeable person, not born in our Society, but convinced by the secret power of Truth in her own breast. We did not see her husband, who was engaged in harvest work. In this family lives a poor old man, blind, and with locks as white as wool. We spoke to him, and his remarks seemed to do us good, evincing that his mind was brought into child-like simplicity, as he, in a few words, described his own weakness, and entire dependence on Divine Goodness. The mistress of the house said he had lived with them for many years, and that she had seen him, at times, in the fields, apparently in a retired state of mind, with tears trickling down his cheeks.

The next day the master of the house made way for his men and boys, with the maid-servants, quite a large number, to come and sit down with us; and I think we may, in humility, confess that our Heavenly Father favored us, in ministering according to the ability given, and we trust to their edification.

I note down, as a watchword for myself, that I am this day made sensible that there is need to watch; and most especially in times of favor, for here is danger of sliding into a state of ease. I have this day felt the reproofs of instruction in my own mind, for not being sufficiently guarded in my conduct towards

strangers. There is a propensity, in some natures, to be open and unreserved; but I wish to be thankful for the gentle internal monition, and to remember that it is needful to be prudent, especially when thus engaged in the service of the great cause of Truth; even innocent cheerfulness, if not strictly guarded, may lead into inconvenience."

Calling on a Moravian minister who had been to visit them, she says: "Truly a uniting power spread over us, and I believe we parted in that Christian spirit which sincerely desires each other's growth in the real principles of Truth. Surely there still are different dispensations, as to the outward, but one and the same spirit! In a few words, delivered in great simplicity, H. S. exhorted us, 'as we had received Christ, so to walk in Him.' In the afternoon, visited a serious family of Moravians, who seemed to receive us with open house and heart."

Soon after the conclusion of this journey, Mary Capper went to visit her brother Jasper at Stoke Newington, at which time she says: "It came under my consideration, whether it might not be profitable to myself, or in some measure to the dear children with whom my lot is now cast, to take some written account of my daily thoughts and actions, with the most prevailing dispositions of my mind. It is under humiliating apprehensions that I enter upon this

work, as I mean to be honest in the main, though I often think it a favor that we are not obliged to tell all we think; for strange is the motley throng of human thoughts!"

First month 4th, 1795.—*First-day.* "Went to meeting, where our friend, Thomas Scattergood, was favored, in gospel love and power, largely to minister instruction, consolation and encouragement to the devoted in heart, particularly to the young and rising generation; and I think that, according to my measure, my desires were sincere and earnest that the dear children may be rightly encouraged to hold on their way, in holy integrity."

"In the afternoon, after some conflict of doubts and fears, I ventured to express a few words, whether under right influence I must leave to Him who judgeth in mercy: but for this sweet, consolatory word mercy, as a distinguishing attribute of our Creator and Redeemer, surely my heart would faint within me! At the close of the day, while my sister was reading the Scriptures, my mind was favored with a little overflowing tenderness."

Fifth-day. "In the Scripture reading, and solemn pause, my mind was comforted. My brother was so kind as to read us a little account of the method pursued by himself and my sister, in the instruction and education of their children. With some parts my

mind was much affected, even to tears; and a language arose in my heart, O! that all parents were thus solidly concerned for the good of their offspring! As I look toward my other near and dear relatives, who stand in this important station, and towards those who are unmarried, my desire is that genuine religion, in its true spirit and power, may so work upon their minds as to open their understandings in the way that is right, and that will lead to peace, when the world, and all its gaudy, busy scenes, shall vanish as a dream."

Sixth-day. Dear Rebecca showed some disposition to self-will and ill-humor at her studies this morning; in the evening, in some tenderness of spirit, I mingled my tears with hers, I trust to our mutual comfort, and renewed encouragement to strive against the evil propensities of our nature, and to wrestle for the everlasting blessing. Experienced sweet reviving hope and faith, while my brother read a portion of the prophecies of Habakkuk. Retired to rest in peace.

First-day 11*th.* At meeting, my mind rather insensible to good, but kept alive in the secret hope and belief, that none ever sought the Lord in vain, though He is pleased at times to hide the light of His countenance from His waiting, dependent children. In simplicity, humility and faith is our safety.

Third-day. Still favored with desires after preservation, and with some sense of my own weakness, and utter inability to help or save myself. Felt also a strong and affectionate desire for the best welfare of my near and very dear relatives.

Fifth-day. After the usual reading, M. Whiting walked with me to Tottenham meeting. A little act of obedience to apprehended duty, in visiting a family under affliction, seems to have relieved my mind from some oppression; and the kindness of some friends was comforting to me. May the Fountain and Father of living mercies be pleased, in His own free grace, to preserve me, with all His little ones, in simplicity and true lowliness, and in obedience to His own requirings; in condescending mercy, giving us to distinguish what is His holy will concerning us!

Sixth-day. The first breathing of my spirit was after preservation from all evil, and that I might more fully know the Power that leads from every hurtful thing. In the afternoon the little girls and I visited some poor families, and had a degree of sweet satisfaction in being empowered to give some relief. Great are the necessities of the poor at this day; added to the extreme severity of the weather, every article of food is at a high price; a quartern

loaf is 1*s.* 5*d.*; much is done by subscription, to alleviate their sufferings — much is wanted.

Seventh-day. In my private cogitations, found self still alive, and that its branches shoot in all directions, and still want the pruning knife. One of the dear children a little untoward; but upon retiring to rest, after lying awhile upon the pillow, tenderness and contrition were granted. Precious are the evidences of a broken heart, and contrite spirit; it is my joy to be permitted feelingly to participate.

19*th*, *Second-day.* Another little girl added to my sister's olive branches. My niece Rebecca, with her little sister Katharine, went to Plashet, with their Aunt Fry. The dear remaining children were as quiet as might be expected, but I felt myself a very poor substitute among them, and was rather uncomfortable. I endeavored to fill my sister's station, by attending to the little one's lessons. In the afternoon more at leisure, and enjoyed the respite; in the evening, the subject of our reading was very affecting, relative to some of the grievous iniquities of the Slave Trade. O! how cruel is the human heart, when not changed by the power of God! I feel sad under the consideration.

Sixth-day. The night was so intensely cold, that I could scarcely sleep; what, then, must be the sufferings of the half-clothed and hungry poor!

A French lesson before breakfast; read afterwards in the Epistle to the Hebrews. The children, at their usual occupations, did not give much trouble, but my mind was anxious and not comfortable. I seemed to wish for more ability to instruct the young mind, and felt myself very ignorant in divers useful things. I thought it would be pleasant to be learned, without the trouble of learning; as in a higher concern, it is desirable to be humble, but who is there that likes to be humbled?

25*th, First-day.* Walked to town; on our way there and back, my nephew Samuel and I called upon some poor families, and gave a little, through the bounty of a Friend in London. The long-continued severity of the weather calls for consideration of the poor. The river is so frozen, that the bargemen cannot follow their usual occupation. Coals are three shillings per bushel, and I am told that some of the poor buy them by the quart. Thermometer twenty-one degrees below the freezing point.

A warm desire has been raised in my heart, on my own account, that I may both be preserved from offering the sacrifice of fools, and from keeping back what may be compared to the small tithes, when they are really required at my hands. O! for a right spirit, and a discerning judgment!

28*th.* The meeting proved a time of conflict. Surely our spiritual enemies are lively! Still, I have hope in the promises. The Redeemer of men is my Captain and my Saviour. O! may my spirit cleave unto Him; then will my soul be kept from the jaws of the devourer. Elizabeth Fry took me back to Newington. In the evening, my mind was not in a desirable state. I spoke to my niece Rebecca in a wrong manner, which, upon cool reflection, I was made willing to acknowledge and condemn. O! the humiliations which fallen nature stands in need of.

29*th.* Surely our Heavenly Father deals graciously with us, when He discovers to us our insufficiency, our weakness, and our dependent state! During the morning's reading and retirement, my spirit was raised in desire to follow our spiritual Joshua, that I may witness all the polluted inhabitants to be destroyed; and I wished the dear children might be fed with the sincere milk of the word, and grow thereby, so as to become valiant in resisting evil.

Second month.— Sixth-day. "The word of the Lord is quick and powerful" — a reprover of evil, discerning and manifesting the thoughts; and I have believed it no small favor to be made sensible of such a secret Power. This morning the dear chil-

dren not quite so well disposed for application as at some times; but who is uniformly disposed toward good? There is need of patience, both with ourselves and others.

12*th.* Very severely cold. At the morning reading and retirement, a little secret hope arose, that the power and mercy of our Heavenly Father was extended toward us. My sister went through some of the children's lessons; they also studied with their master. A liberal and guarded education, under the eye of judicious and well-informed parents or teachers, appears to me no small privilege, where the young mind is preserved from imbibing false ideas, and is instructed as to the different nature of things, with a foundation of useful knowledge, instead of that superficial learning which puffs up, and does not profit. Rebecca and I visited some poor families, and had the comfort of finding them in improved circumstances.

CHAPTER V.

MARRIAGE OF HER FRIEND, MARY BEESLEY, TO JAMES LEWIS — CONTINUES HER RELIGIOUS ENGAGEMENTS — DEATH OF MARY KNOWLES — DEATH OF JAMES LEWIS.

For several succeeding years Mary Capper was frequently engaged with her friend, Mary Beesley, in religious service among the members of her own Society, visiting their families on this account. They also repeatedly visited jails and poor-houses, ministering in the love of the gospel to the miserable inmates.

On the 9th of Ninth month, 1802, she records: "I had the privilege of accompanying Deborah Darby,* in her consoling, encouraging visits to several sick and tried friends. This service, when rightly engaged in, has often appeared to me to be the sweetest portion of the Christian's commission — to comfort the mourners, and to direct the feeble-minded where to look for a renewal of strength."

15*th*. "In meeting, my faith was renewed, that they who wait upon the Lord shall renew their

* An eminent minister of the Society of Friends.

strength; and although experience confirms the truth, that in this world we shall have trouble, still peace is yet to be found in the Lord."

17*th.* "I account it a favor to be again permitted to return to my old, quiet apartments, after an absence of several months, in the course of which time I have seen many changes and distressing occurrences, with perplexities and dismay. Ah! I have thought, without a humble hope, through faith and obedience, of inheriting the promises, what a vast, howling wilderness is this world! how tossed and troubled on every side! but the simple, obedient children of the one Lord are not long left in a state of sorrowful disquietude; some sweet, calming influence is graciously permitted, to revive the drooping faith, and to fix the hopes on a better and more enduring portion."

1803.—*Fourth month* 10*th.* "In a large assembly, much favored with solemn quiet, my much-loved Mary Beesley entered into the engagement of marriage with James Lewis, under a sense of Divine approbation. She was afterwards enabled, in a very calm manner, to address the assembly."

The intimate Christian friendship which united Mary Capper to her beloved friend, appears to have been uninterrupted by this event, and we find them soon again occupied in gospel labor, in various neigh-

borhoods. At the close of one of these religious engagements, her friend returning to her home, she records: "I believe we mutually felt the separation, after so long a season of uniting intercourse; but it is no small favor to part under the sweet influence of heart-tendering affection — in unity of spirit, and peace of mind. No friendship of the world is like this! which I trust will yet bind us together, though outwardly apart. My allotment is still uncertain; the kindness of my friends supplies me with present accommodations."

First-day, Tenth month 7th, 1804. "The morning meeting (at Birmingham) was large, and I thought favored with the overshadowing of that invisible Power which would gather the mind from the lo! heres, and lo! theres, and stay the thoughts and wandering imaginations, bringing all into captivity. I was thankful to feel this, but a fear possessed my mind, in respect to some, that there was too great an anxiety after worldly possessions. It is possible to pursue lawful things too eagerly, so as to be unfitted for higher and more noble attainments. It is a good thing, and becoming our Christian profession, to be content with such outward gain as may enable us to procure things convenient for us, without the appearance of grandeur or superfluity."

Hearing soon after, from Mary Lewis, that her

husband was in declining health, she says: "I intend to go to my dear friends, in their troubles — at least to partake, if I cannot alleviate." On arriving there, she found them improved.

1805.—*Second month 3d, First-day.* "The meetings were held in silence, but some of our minds were secretly engaged in desire that our ways might be ordered of the Lord. In the evening, when gathered to read the Scriptures, during our silent waiting upon God, a feeling of awful seriousness spread over us, and tendered our spirits, so that we all wept; and in brokenness, it was acknowledged that there surely is encouragement to believe, and, under all trials, humbly to trust in the Lord. It was a time of renewed favor, and ability was granted to return vocal thanks to the Giver of all our mercies."

Third month 6th. "A solemn stillness overspread us, at our small meeting. In seasons of inward instruction, the mind often earnestly desires that all professors of Christianity would embrace every opportunity of waiting for that wisdom which is pure, and comes from above. They who will be taught of the Lord, must wait upon Him."

25th. "Came to Birmingham, where I found comfortable accommodations, with my own goods in nice order, prepared for me; also kind friends ready to receive me, and to provide for me all things need-

ful, upon reasonable terms. Can I be too grateful, under a sense of the blessings of which I am permitted to partake! How long I may be stationary I know not; but I only desire to be here, or anywhere, just so long as it is best for me."

28*th*. "I walked to see a Friend who has been very ill. He expressed his intention, if restored to health, never more to pursue business with his former ardor, so as to leave no time for more important concerns. A poor youth dined with us, who seems nearly gone in a decline. I hope he was sensible of his true condition."

This young man died soon after; it is said his last words were, "All is lost but Jesus."

Fourth month 10*th*. "At our monthly meeting at Tamworth, it was the exercise of my mind, that the lawful cares and concerns of the present life may not be unlawfully pursued. I dined at John Fowler's, Alder Mills, who is just recovering from a paralytic seizure — a man in the prime of life, with a young family, thus warned to be prepared for eternity!"

21*st*, *First-day*. "Our morning meeting was very fully attended, and there was a sense of mercy being continued to us, with some renewed ability to minister, and to point out the difference between the dispensations of the Law and the Gospel; with a

heart-felt desire that we might be so wise as to avail ourselves of the glorious privileges of Grace and Truth brought to light by Jesus Christ."

Fifth month 12*th*. "This morning we had the company and labors of Rachel Fowler. Christ crucified, a suffering, dying Saviour, was preached, as being incomprehensible to the natural man, and still a stumbling-block to the uncircumcised in heart, and foolishness to the seemingly wise reasoner; but unto them that believe, the power of God unto salvation."

Mary Capper attended, in 1805, the Yearly Meeting in London, and thus alludes to one of the sittings of the Women's Yearly Meeting:—

"We received an instructive visit from William Jackson,* and some other men Friends. Much was said to recommend retrenchment, which was summed up, in a few words, by J. G. Bevan, before they left the meeting, as follows: 'Friends! the way is narrow; contraction, not expansion, is the watchword!' Much concurring advice was afterwards expressed by women Friends; perhaps there has rarely been a time when more solicitude has been manifested for the help and preservation of our youth, that they may believe in Jesus, and bow to His cross, in the

* A minister from America, then on a religious visit.

subjection of their own will, and in a life of self-denial, contrary to the false liberty which seeks to lay waste all Christian discipline."

1806.—*Fourth month 8th.* "Some weight of inward distress has, at various times, pressed upon my mind, relating to some individuals engaged in a trade which seems to me connected with a source manifestly inconsistent with the principle of purity. I have been, in some measure, relieved, by one individual opening the subject, on his own account. I have also, after serious deliberation, sought and found a suitable opportunity of speaking, in simplicity and great tenderness, to a young man just entering upon a branch of business which seems to me very objectionable, and contrary to our Christian principle. I was treated with much civility, and heard with attention; but, alas! interest and false reasoning are strong barriers."

Fifth month 19th. "Yearly Meeting of ministers and elders. Solemnity was mercifully spread over us as a canopy, and vocal prayer was offered. Our aged friend, John Kendall, earnestly recommended the reading of the Scriptures daily in families; not to satisfy ourselves with perusing them privately, as individuals, but to collect the servants, etc., that all may partake."

In the First month, 1807, Mary Capper received

a letter from her brother Jasper, informing her of the serious illness of their friend, Mary Knowles, through whose acquaintance, it may be remembered, they were first attracted to the Society of Friends. She was a person of remarkable ability. Her conversational powers were so great, and so peculiarly fascinating, that her company was much sought; and she was thereby induced to mix unprofitably with many worldly-minded persons, to her own great loss. Having attained to a great age, as she drew near the close of life, she was, through mercy, permitted a long illness, during which she was made to feel the burden of sin, and to lament over her mis-spent time and misapplied talents; and there is reason to hope that the cry of her penitent spirit was heard, and that she was made a partaker of the salvation which is in Christ.

The following letter from Anne Capper mentions her death:—

"Paradise Row, *Second month 9th*, 1807.

My Dear Sister:—Doubtless thou hast heard of the death of our poor dear Mary Knowles. She was closely tried, until near her end, by not being able to feel the presence of Him whom she sought ability to pray to and to worship, and upon whom she very frequently called for forgiveness. Oh! how

lightly she esteemed all her accomplishments; 'what,' as she said, 'the world calls accomplishments.' She said to my sister and me, 'I repent in dust and ashes.' I saw her the day before her departure, when she appeared very desirous to feel an assurance of acceptance. Turning towards me, and taking my hand, she said, 'I commend you all to God. Possess Him, possess Him, if you can, whatever becomes of me! I hope I shall not be a cast-away forever! I believe I shall not.' She was quiet when I left her. Early in the morning the nurse heard her say, 'Lord help me to pray; I cannot of myself.' These were her last words. I trust she found forgiveness and everlasting mercy, for Jesus' sake."

Being on a visit to her beloved friends, James and Mary Lewis, she attended their little meeting, and records:—

"I thought it an unspeakable privilege, which I would not barter for all the world, to have the opportunity of thus meeting in companies, though small, to retire from all, even lawful concerns, and with the best ability that we have, to wait upon God, the eternal, inexhaustible Source of all good. O! how refreshing to the drooping mind, to experience, from time to time, that the Rock of our salvation remains unshaken, though the floods, the winds,

and the rain may beat upon the poor tabernacle. I do afresh believe, that if, through faithful dedication, we grow in spiritual experience, we shall acknowledge that there is no joy like unto the joy of God's salvation."

In the early part of the year 1810, she mentions the death of her valued friend, James Lewis, who, she says, "was a man of unusual simplicity, and without guile; humble, and of a retired spirit; yet hospitable and affectionate towards his friends — a lover of those who followed after righteousness. Many a time, during his long decline, he said, that he loved everybody, especially those who loved the Lord Jesus, out of a pure heart. He calmly breathed his last, having, a short time previously, exclaimed, 'Be thou with me, O! Lord!' On being asked if he were comfortable, he answered, 'Yes, leave me to the Lord!' These were the last words he uttered."

CHAPTER VI.

LETTERS — EXTRACTS FROM DIARY — DEATH OF MARY LEWIS — AFFECTIONATE ADDRESS.

In the Fifth month, 1811, she attended the Yearly Meeting at London; and tarrying for some weeks afterwards in the neighborhood, at Stoke Newington, she addressed the following letter to her brother Jasper: —

Seventh month, 1811.

My Dear Brother Jasper: — It is difficult for me to speak, but as it particularly impresses my mind, I wish to tell thee, that since my present great weakness and incapacity for joining in conversation, I have remembered early scenes; and particularly since I came here, some transactions between thee and me, which have been of great importance to myself; and I think, as I even now record it with tears, thou mayst be comforted by being reminded thereof; and in low times, for I believe that even confirmed believers have their stripping times, thou mayst be encouraged to hold fast thy confidence, and be thankful that thou hast been an instrumental

means of stirring up the pure mind, or gift, in one poor straying soul, at least; yes, my dear brother, even though I knew it not; and I believe thou wast far from knowing the work which was, at an early period, begun, in the secret of our hearts. And although many an impediment has been permitted, and we have more and more seen the evils of the human heart, yet heavenly kindness has been underneath, and helped us hitherto.

To return to our early days — it has been revived, almost like a scene of yesterday, when we were young, at Rugeley together, that once, when our parents were out, and I was sitting in the little parlor, thou calledst me; and when I came to thee, thou hadst a paper before thee, and hadst been writing. With a serious countenance, thou asked me if I could recollect anything that thou hadst done amiss, or could help thee to remember what thou hadst said or done that was wrong, as thou wished to keep an account of thy actions. No doubt, I thought it strange, and said something in childish derision; at which I remember thou lookedst grave, and saidst the Testament recommended watchfulness; at which I foolishly laughed, and said that that was an old-fashioned book. Well I recollect the inward conviction which I felt, when thou saidst, "Oh! sister Mary, if you begin to despise that book, I have

done!" Away I ran, but felt much distressed; and I know not, that from that time, I ever dared to speak lightly of the Scriptures, or of religion.

Although, when gradually becoming serious, it was not suddenly that I made any outward change; and though I had prejudices to encounter, yet here, my dear brother, thou hadst, as it were, opened a door, which step by step I entered. O! thou knowest not to the full, the strong holds of naughtiness, perverseness, depraved inclinations, petulance, and impatience, which were in my unconverted heart, more hard and stubborn, surely, than many others.

Have I not then, great, very great cause, to be humble, and to be thankful to the First Cause? and to be grateful, in tender love, towards the instrument of my first awakening? Yes, my dear brother, Heavenly Goodness has dealt bountifully with me; and may all thy conflicts, and all thy trials, be sanctified to thee; and may we, in our different allotments, be of one heart and one mind, ascribing the marvellous mercy of salvation unto the redeeming power of a Saviour's love. Often the secret language of my heart is, "a Redeemer, or I perish! a Saviour, or I die!"

With heartfelt affection, I subscribe, thy sister,

MARY CAPPER.

In the spring of 1814, she thus writes to two of her friends from Birmingham: —

BIRMINGHAM, *Third month 22d*, 1814.

DEAR FRIENDS: — I have thought much of you since I left; and though my tender affection towards my fellow-travellers, in the time of trouble, can avail little to lighten the actual pressure of grief, whether openly manifested or more secretly felt, yet I esteem it a privilege to be made capable of mourning with those that mourn. In my view, Christian sympathy enhances the importance of life, and brings us nearer to the great Pattern of Christian perfection, who was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. The longer I live, the more I seem to see, and be convinced, that human nature, with all its propensities, must be subjected and refined through suffering. Marvel not then, my dear friends, when your pleasant pictures may be marred, or even what you may think your reasonable hopes, disappointed. As true Christian believers, quickened by Divine Grace, you have a new path to tread; banded in heart, and united in spirit, to serve the Lord and promote the spread of His righteousness, my dear friends, through all your trials, let not your faith fail, but keep your eye steadfast to the Power that can make you exemplary, and importantly useful, in your day; that,

being proved and tried, you may be enabled to speak to others of that help and comfort wherewith you have been comforted. I believe it is the want of entire subjection which keeps us from the possession of that peace of mind which surpasses the natural understanding of man, and is a precious token of a Saviour's love. Think not that I write as having attained; ah! no! though at times I am favored with some foretaste of this Divine gift, I find painful lets and hindrances; but this one thing I desire to do, to press forward with an earnest, humble hope, that He who has awakened my spirit, and a little opened my understanding, will never leave me to my own poor guidance; and I would encourage you, my dear friends, to hold on a heavenly course, without fainting by the way; ever bearing in mind, that it is not by outward observation that we shall stand, but by the Grace of God. Affectionately,

MARY CAPPER.

From her diary, under date of Fourth month 13th:—

At the monthly meeting at Tamworth; here is a large company of young Friends, who appear naturally lovely and kindly disposed; but there was a feeling that something more is needed; that the heart must bow to the yoke of Christ, and suffer the

refining fire to consume the dross, and prepare the vessel for usefulness. There is a great want of sacrifices, and of pure offerings, in the Church.

24*th*, *First-day*. Was at Peel meeting, and had in lively remembrance the first time of my sitting down among this Society; unto whom, I trust, after many years of probation, I am now steadfastly joined in Christian fellowship. My desire is to be brought into, and to be kept in humility and godly fear, by that which did first enlighten me, and convince me of the spirituality of true religion.

26*th*. Spent the morning pleasantly with my dear niece, Rebecca Bevan; she instructs her two elder children, with the kind and important assistance of J. G. Bevan, who takes his seat in the school-room, and appears to feel much interest in the children's advancement. Dear man! he seems gradually declining in bodily vigor, but his company is very instructive.

27*th*. At the week-day meeting, our aged friend, Mary Pryor, was enabled sweetly to encourage the lowly ones to hold on in the path of obedience.

28*th*. We had a quiet day, in the peaceful enjoyment of social intercourse. How precious and highly valuable is that fellowship which unites families and relatives as in one mind! Never did I more fully feel or prize it, as a heavenly blessing.

Fifth month 2*d.* After the Scripture reading, and a pause, wherein the watchful, attentive mind has opportunity silently to feel its wants, and reverently to bow at the footstool of mercy, we retired to the school-room, where I sat at my needle, an observer of the great pains taken by my dear niece, assisted by J. G. Bevan, to instruct the children. It is very gratifying to me to sit with those who are qualified to teach, and those who are disposed to learn; but I perceive it is an arduous task for the mother of a family, in addition to her other cares, to dedicate so large a portion of time to education.

3*d.* The morning was fine, and we had a little stroll in the garden before breakfast. At reading time, the dear children were very quiet, and I thought something precious was to be felt. I ventured to express my renewed sense of the value and importance of the practice of thus collecting together parents, children and servants, for the purpose of reading the Scriptures, and in order to experience a preparation of mind for pursuing our various occupations and duties, with propriety and patience. There will be need of patience unto the end of the race.

After school-hours I accompanied my niece to call on the poor and afflicted — a delightful employment, when we have the will and ability to give pecuniary

relief, or to instruct them how to find the true Comforter.

6*th*. I left my endeared nieces, and returned to Paradise Row. Dear Rebecca walked with me, and staid dinner with us, which was very pleasant to us all; indeed, it is precious to feel the uniting bond of love and increasing fellowship, as with one desire, to be kept by the one Spirit; knowing our own imperfections and incapacity to keep ourselves from falling.

On the 12th of the Ninth month, J. G. Bevan suddenly expired, during his afternoon sleep. In allusion to this circumstance, Mary Capper wrote from Leominster: "He had finished his course; and though survivors may mourn his loss, yet the great Head of the Church can raise fresh supplies, and bring thousands and tens of thousands up and down to cast their gifts into His treasury, yea, to dedicate their all unto their Lord's service; and let Him do what He will with them and theirs."

The health of Mary Lewis had long been gradually giving way. She was affectionately nursed by her faithfully attached friend, who was with her to the last; and who thus wrote, on the occasion of her death, to some of her dear and intimate friends: —

Eleventh month 28th, 1814.

MY DEAR FRIENDS: — This day, about twelve o'clock, I was enabled to resign, with calmness, the immortal spirit of the kindest friend any individual could have, into the hands of a faithful Creator, no more to witness her tender, affectionate care and attention to me. Dear creature! she slowly declined, though her sufferings have been great, and borne with unusual cheerfulness. On seventh-day morning a stupor or drowsiness took place, with laborious breathings until towards the last, when she calmly expired. She has uniformly expressed a desire to be laid in her husband's grave; it is, therefore, intended to convey the remains to Trosnant, the interment to be on first-day morning. Dear friends, farewell; I am as well as can be expected, but I want rest. Love to all our dear friends; I subscribe myself,

MARY CAPPER.

TO KATHARINE CAPPER.

LEOMINSTER, *First month 23d*, 1815.

When I can look into my own heart, and have a sense of its natural propensities from my youth up, O! how marvellous appears the mercy extended to me; so that, my endeared niece, the secret acknowledgment of my soul is, God is love! and willeth not

that any should perish. O! that the whole rational creation, the world over, would receive, own, and strive to obey, His Divine gift of Grace in the heart; then might we, as one large family, together praise the Lord for His goodness, and His mercy, which endureth forever. I have long been a debtor to my much-loved niece, R. Bevan, for a nice, affectionate letter. I have not been unmindful of the privation and grief that has been recently brought upon you, by the awful change which has taken place in the circle of your choicest friends, your justly-valued, much-loved Christian adviser having filled his measure. His pilgrimage ended, he has left an example to those who loved him, to follow him as he followed Christ.

MARY CAPPER.

She this year again attended the Yearly Meeting, concerning which she made the following memoranda:—

LONDON, *Fifth month 22d.*

The select Yearly Meeting met. Many are the vacant seats of those who have been eminently useful in their day; but with humble hope and confidence in redeeming, sanctifying Power, we look towards a rising generation, many of whom appear to have given up their names, and to be advancing in dedication and usefulness.

William Grover and George Stacey were at the table. Some tender cautions were given, with respect to those benevolent associations, in which members of our Society are now so conspicuous. There was a fear in some minds, even while they rejoiced in the spreading of knowledge, the distribution of the Scriptures and the instruction of the poor, lest a danger might secretly lurk in the pleasure received from eloquent speeches, and flowing language, at the public meetings of these associations; especially lest our dear young friends should thereby lose their relish for simplicity, and be gradually drawn from the love of silent waiting in our meetings for worship; that waiting, wherein they may know Jesus to be in the midst, teaching as man never taught, and by whom we have access to the Father. There was much worthy of observation in these remarks.

24*th*. The women's Yearly Meeting began.

25*th*. A testimony concerning our valuable friend, John Kendall, deceased, was read. He was favored with heavenly wisdom, in his early years, and dedicated a large portion of a long life, and much of his substance, to the promotion of righteousness. In his love to his fellow-men, and desire to draw them off from mis-spending their time, he occasionally entered public-houses, and twice the theatre, in order to persuade those present, who were his neighbors,

to consider the importance of life, and of the soul's salvation. In the afternoon, a testimony respecting dear Mary Lewis was read.

26*th*. At Devonshire-house meeting, some powerful testimonies were borne to the Divine mission of the Saviour upon earth, in His outward appearance, and to the operation of His Spirit, revealed in the hearts of the children of men. Many seemed to be seriously affected.

28*th*, *First-day*. Martha Routh was enabled to preach the glad tidings of the gospel; and Jesus was set forth as a Saviour and Redeemer.

31*st*. Sarah Hustler gave in a written account of the money entrusted to her last year, when she accompanied Elizabeth Coggeshall into Germany and the South of France. She also expressed that she had been thankful to be the medium through which the liberality of Friends, in this land, had contributed to comfort many; and that, while employed in relieving their distresses, she had often thought of her sisters, in her native land, with desires that they might rightly appreciate their privileges, and be willing to make sacrifices to supply their suffering fellow-creatures.

E. Coggeshall tenderly touched upon the superfluity observable in clothing, etc., and we were called upon to show our gratitude to the Author of all our blessings.

Sixth month 1*st*. Instructive counsel was given, relative to the care which should be exercised over servants of every denomination; that nothing may exist in our families that can in any way harm them; and that, as much as in us lies, we may encourage them in that which is good. The clerk, in a very feeling manner, read the concluding minute; and after a precious silent pause, we separated.

The mind of Mary Capper appears to have been frequently much exercised on behalf of that class of persons who are employed as haymakers, etc., in the neighborhood of London; and at this period she expressed her interest for them in the following address, which she had printed and circulated amongst them: —

An affectionate Address to those who are employed in harvest work, 1815.

How rich, how beautiful are the fields! how promising are the crops, to supply the wants of man and of cattle! Shall we behold them without one grateful acknowledgment to that bountiful Giver from whom all our mercies flow? The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; and you, my fellow-pilgrims, who labor and toil in gathering the produce of the fields, and in heaping up stores, you are partakers of

the fruits of the earth, you eat of the bread that strengthens the heart of man; and that it may continue to be given to you in abundance, is the desire of thousands, who are themselves supplied with it. Words can but faintly set forth, how affectionately, how earnestly, your Christian friends wish, that the blessing of the Lord may be with you, in the fields, when your hands are diligently employed in hard labor. They earnestly desire that when the toil of the day is over, peace, the inward peace of your minds, may make your rest sweet, and refresh your weary bodies, fitting you for the task of the succeeding day. Let affectionate solicitude, for your soul's sake, prevail upon you to avoid all excess in drinking; it is an ungrateful waste of the Creator's bounty. Drunkenness unfits both the mind and the body for all that is innocent and good, it is a shameful inlet to bad and idle words, to profane and filthy communications, and to foolish jestings, which things are dangerous in their consequences, and often lead into serious harms, that might not be even thought of in the beginning of familiarities.

Permit a stranger to put you in mind, that without serious thoughtfulness and prayer, neither the poor nor the rich, the laborer nor the master, is safe. We cannot, in our own strength, resist temptation. Oh! it grieves your friends, who are interested for you,

who observe you when you are not aware, it grieves them, when the old men amongst you commit folly, and the young unhappily follow the sad example.

Why will ye not accept a Saviour's redeeming love, who suffered, was crucified, and died, to save us from our sins? Receive this exhortation in seriousness, and let it make some impression for good on your hearts, as it is offered to you by a fellow-traveller who has your present and eternal happiness in view.

And you, dear young children of the poor, who attend your parents and others in the labors of the fields, remember that your Heavenly Father careth for you; that He pitieth you, even whilst you are ignorant of Him. Think upon His goodness and mercy; He would keep you from sin, from all wicked words, from lies and deceit; take heed, dear children, that you learn not these things from those who are older than you, and ought to teach you better things. Love one another, be gentle, kind and good; then nothing can harm you.

CHAPTER VII.

LETTERS TO HER RELATIVES — DEATH OF HER BROTHER JASPER — VISIT TO WARWICK COUNTY JAIL.

To her Brother Jasper Capper.

Birmingham, *Second month* 17*th*, 1818.

My Dear Brother: — Often, in my solitude, I think of thee; my heart seems increasingly bound to thee, as we descend the slope of time. In some of my best moments, thou seemest present with me; and in my low strippings, I think of thee. When Satan whispers ugly things, and would fright my soul from prayer, sometimes on my knees, "with teary face," like the poor Indian, bending low, I seek relief; and though many a time no form of words presents, there seems a spiritual intercession, and a calm succeeds; not always immediately. Faith and patience are kept alive by exercise. Then, again, I think of thee, and my soul takes courage. May we not be thankful that we can, in the secret of our hearts, believe, "The precious blood was shed, to cleanse this heart of mine!" Yes, thine

and mine! from all sin! that being justified, we may be glorified; clothed in the fine linen, white and clean, as no fuller on earth can make it! No skilful alchemist can so separate the precious from the vile! My beloved brother, may we be more, and yet more, favored with joy and peace in believing, is the prayer of thy sister,

MARY CAPPER.

TO HER BROTHER JASPER AND HIS FAMILY.

BIRMINGHAM, *Fifth month* 1*st*, 1819.

MY DEAR BROTHER JASPER, ETC.: — To be hasty in feeling disappointments, and not prompt to acknowledge gratifications, will not, I hope, be laid upon me. This very morning I received a fourfold kindness, making ample compensation for my disappointed anticipations. Wrong, you did me none, so to forgive there is nothing; and in the present instance, I may consider myself a gainer, by thy pen being called into action, to tell me that you loved me, etc. It is more to me than a library of books. My dear sister, the comparatively transient pain, which is past, is more than repaid by present feelings, arising from a spring afresh discovering itself from beneath an accidental covering of some scattered fragments. 'Tis enough! the stream remains undiminished, and I am now in my own comfortable

apartments, alone, without interruption enjoying your kind communication.

How manifold are my consolations! I would not change my imperfect sense of the mercy and the favors conferred daily upon me, for the possession of worldly wealth and power. With reverence, not with boasting, I write; for I am sure it is of the Lord's mercy.

My beloved brother and sister! it may possibly be our experience, in days to come, that whilst others in stronger health are more actively and conspicuously engaged in promoting the right thing, and in beholding the manifestations of the Lord's power in the earth, we may have to taste of the pure water that flows softly, in the low valley, where there is freshness and greenness, and where the longing soul is satisfied, even though separated from Christian friends, gathered together to help one another. The great Helper of these, also "setteth the solitary in families."

I have to contemplate many distresses around me, in the present day of commercial troubles. The gracious Creator of men has surely some wise, benevolent purpose in this chastisement; His humble children, and dependent servants, will submit with reverence, and crave for patience of soul, with wisdom to direct their steps. My dear nephew and

niece! I did not know the power that I seem to have possessed, to cause such a muster of your forces in your fourfold epistle. There is strength in love, which does as much execution as silver trumpets and battering rams. In most cordial, sweet affection towards every one of you, including the lóvely children, I subscribe your strongly attached sister and aunt,

MARY CAPPER.

Her brother Jasper had long been a severe sufferer from serious sickness. His mind was evidently fixed upon the Redeemer, though his poor mortal body was in much pain and affliction. He felt his foundation to be upon the Rock of ages. In the Twelfth month, 1819, he breathed his last. Mary Capper says, on this affecting occasion:—

"He was truly a precious brother! We were, I trust, joined in spirit, so that death cannot separate us. On the 9th of last month he very solemnly said, 'When my time is come, if I should say little or much, anything or nothing, I request it may be said, that I died, relying on the mercy of God through Christ Jesus;' and on the 11th, 'None but Jesus can do helpless sinners good, and I am one.' He was at that time very ill, but afterwards revived for a time. About a week before his death the pain, etc., having returned, he said, 'I never saw myself

so lost and undone without a Saviour, as I have done in this illness. I have suffered anguish of mind; and but for faith in the Saviour, what should I have done! He has paid our great debt!' On the day upon which he died, he expressed to his wife, his belief, that when he should be taken from her, God would be her consolation. The last conflict came on just after lying down in bed, and he peacefully expired in the midst of his family. We have often had sweet converse together; that is over, as it respects this state of existence, and it becomes us to leave all that is to come in the ordering of a faithful Creator."

"The links which bind me to earth, and to endearing connexions, are gently loosening one by one; and my spirit, in some favored moments, aspires to a more perfect union."

The following letter was addressed to his family:

Twelfth month 29th, 1819.

MY DEAR MOURNING RELATIVES:—Although the event has for some time been anticipated, nevertheless, now the spirit has fled, what a void does the affectionate heart feel! In my measure, as a sister, increasingly united to a brother evidently increasing in all that is lovely and fitting for heaven and blessedness, I participate with you in mourning our loss.

Every day, for some time to come, will, I seem aware, add to your sense of it. Necessary arrangements arouse every tender emotion of the heart; scenes past, and sweet communion almost forgotten, revive with fresh interest. Link after link seems to be rapidly breaking; but there remains a soul-cheering belief, that although yet but faintly seen, and imperfectly understood, there is a union which cannot be broken! When you are shedding tears over the grave of our very dearly beloved one, calm resignation, and the assurance that his redeemed spirit is clothed with the righteousness of Christ, in whom he trusted as his Saviour, may be your stay and your strong consolation. Long have we known him as disclaiming every rag of self-righteousness. How often was his spirit broken and humbled! It is precious to remember these seasons.

Shortly before this solemn event, Mary Capper was engaged, under an impressive sense of religious duty, to visit the county jail and house of correction at Warwick; and she derived consolation from the remembrance, that the engagement was known and approved by her beloved brother, at a time when his spirit was so nigh to the haven of rest and of purity.

In a letter to her relatives, she thus alludes to the performance of this service: —

[illegible] in simple obedience to apprehended Christian duty, to Warwick, on the 9th, and was affectionately received by Hannah Evans, whose mind seemed prepared to feel with us. William Whitehead, a kind, valuable elder, of this meeting, entered into my views; and being well acquainted with the jailer and his wife, he easily obtained access for me to the prison, where, accompanied by these two friends, I arrived about the time fixed for the visit. The poor men prisoners were all placed in the chapel; a great calm mercifully spread over us, and supplication was offered, that heavenly mercy might, in truth, be felt to be over all. The stillness was admirable; and we were favoured to feel a measure of our heavenly Father's love to be extended to us, wherein help and comfort were offered to the longing soul.

On [illegible]-day morning, we were introduced to the women: it was an affecting time, and many tears were shed. I do believe Divine mercy was near to us; and I trust that Christian good-will flowed towards this unhappy, misguided part of our fellow-[illegible] is the love of God!

[illegible] earnest solicitude [illegible] patient in the day [illegible] scribe, your closely

[illegible] CAPPER.

The following account of the visit to the female prisoners was afterwards sent, anonymously, to Mary Capper; it was written by a person who was present on that occasion, in a letter to a friend of hers: —

Visit paid by a female Friend to Warwick County Jail.

December, 1819.

This person had a private interview, about two months since, with the servant who murdered her mistress. She is one of the Society of Friends. Last week she paid a visit to the female prisoners, and you must set her before you, in a dark brown gown, a handkerchief pinned close up to the chin, and a plain muslin cap, covered with a black silk hood. There were thirty persons assembled, who rose up to receive her, and remained standing till she began to pray, kneeling. She sat down with her eyes fixed on the ground, as if in deep thought, and then rose, saying nearly the following words: "This silence, no doubt, will be incomprehensible to your minds, but it is nevertheless useful. I wish you to check your busy, active imaginations, to be silent, and to think; to consider your past ways and your present situation, with all that belongs to you, temporally and spiritually; to remember the great God, who, although a God of power and justice, is also a God

of mercy; who will hearken to your prayers, if offered with unfeigned repentance, through faith in His Son, Christ Jesus. Think of your sins, with that humiliation which becomes us all; but particularly, those, in your unhappy situation, who are placed here under locks and bolts and bars, for having offended against the laws both of God and man. In the world, you have practised deceit, and sought a refuge in lies; and are you happy? You have coveted and taken what was not your own; and are you happy? No! Yet you thought you should be, or you would not have done these things; you see, then, that you were mistaken. I pity your mistake; and as a fellow-pilgrim in the journey of life, earnestly tell you, that there is no happiness on earth, but in that obedience which is the evidence of our gratitude to God the Father, and faith in Him, and in the merits and sufferings of Jesus Christ His Son.

Many of you have been tempted to do wrong through poverty, distress and bad company; and when you return into the world at large, as I trust many of you will, may you remember what, before, brought upon you sorrow and degradation; and never fail to pray for the grace of God, to enable you to forsake your evil ways; that, by honesty and staying at home, not going from house

to house, hearing and telling lies, you may obtain kind friends, and be happy by leading a new life. I warn you against hardening and encouraging one another in vice, while you remain here, by laughing at sin, and making light of your crimes; but may the care bestowed on you, by the excellent mistress of this establishment,* who is equally earnest with myself for your souls' welfare, be hereafter rewarded by the knowledge, that sinners have been turned from the evil of their ways, and that you can say, with humble thankfulness of heart, 'Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name!'" She then shook hands with all the prisoners, and addressed them individually. To the murderess she said, "May God Almighty bring conviction to thy soul!" and I could not help addressing my mite of exhortation to her, by begging of her to improve her mind.

The individual spoke for an hour and a half, so you will readily believe, that this is only a very small part of what she uttered; but I have endeavored to recollect the heads of the exhortation.

In 1820, Mary Capper was engaged in religious visits in Wales, and several counties of England. A meeting was held at Coalbrookdale, with the men employed in the iron works. It was estimated that

* Esther Tatnal.

of mercy; who will hearken to your prayers, if offered with unfeigned repentance, through faith in His Son, Christ Jesus. Think of your sins, with that humiliation which becomes us all; but particularly, those, in your unhappy situation, who are placed here under locks and bolts and bars, for having offended against the laws both of God and man. In the world, you have practised deceit, and sought a refuge in lies; and are you happy? You have coveted and taken what was not your own; and are you happy? No! Yet you thought you should be, or you would not have done these things; you see, then, that you were mistaken. I pity your mistake; and as a fellow-pilgrim in the journey of life, earnestly tell you, that there is no happiness on earth, but in that obedience which is the evidence of our gratitude to God the Father, and faith in Him, and in the merits and sufferings of Jesus Christ His Son.

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more than a thousand attended. She spoke for nearly an hour and a half. The meeting, during the silent part of it, as well as during the sermon, was as quiet as though all had been members of our own religious Society. Heavenly love was evidently near this memorable meeting.

In correspondence with the beloved friend who accompanied her on these visits, she says: —

"I am low in mind and body, yet I dare not let go my confidence, that heavenly mercy will not leave me to follow a vain shadow, or to kindle a fire, and warm myself with the sparks. There is nothing my soul longs after with so much earnestness, as the real substance of the religion of Jesus, the soul-satisfying bread of life, daily ministered to nourish and keep alive the immortal spirit."

"Thy cordial sympathy and encouragement are acceptable. In this mixed scene, O! what a favor is the sweet drop of love, inducing the mind to look to the pure, undefiled Source; thence comes the true union of spirit, which subsists through all low times, enduring all that may be allotted, trusting and believing that we shall not be forsaken. The designed end of our trying times doubtless is, that we may be a praying people."

From her diary, while in Herfordshire: —

Tenth month 18*th.* We took tea with a Baptist teacher, with whom, and his humble, sweet-spirited wife, I had in years past some acquaintance. It is precious to find, that unity in the one spirit continues unchanged. We had a little sweet converse, and thought the time came too quickly for our separation.

19*th.* We have several visitors, not of our Society, especially some young women, who appear to have seeking, tender minds, and their behavior is quite agreeable. Two of this description breakfasted with us this morning. The longer we stay here, the more we find of a spirit of inquiry after the pure spirituality of religion and its effects; yet we feel a fear that there is much danger of some talking away what they feel, and which is intended for their help. As to my own steps, I am satisfied it is not my proper business to direct them myself, but simply to follow, as my Heavenly Guide leads the way, and mercifully keeps me childlike enough to obey.

Two very serious young women took tea with us. They had been at our meeting, and they appeared pleased with the Scripture reading, etc., in the evening; also with the expression of a little affectionate counsel. Something is at work to disturb the false rest, and the indifference, which has long held many Christian professors in a state of lukewarmness, and of dangerous security. May the work go forward,

apartments, alone, without interruption enjoying your kind communication.

How manifold are my consolations! I would not change my imperfect sense of the mercy and the favors conferred daily upon me, for the possession of worldly wealth and power. With reverence, not with boasting, I write; for I am sure it is of the Lord's mercy.

My beloved brother and sister! it may possibly be our experience, in days to come, that whilst others in stronger health are more actively and conspicuously engaged in promoting the right thing, and in beholding the manifestations of the Lord's power in the earth, we may have to taste of the pure water that flows softly, in the low valley, where there is freshness and greenness, and where the longing soul is satisfied, even though separated from Christian friends, gathered together to help one another. The great Helper of these, also "setteth the solitary in families."

I have to contemplate many distresses around me, in the present day of commercial troubles. The gracious Creator of men has surely some wise, benevolent purpose in this chastisement; His humble children, and dependent servants, will submit with reverence, and crave for patience of soul, with wisdom to direct their steps. My dear nephew and

niece! I did not know the power that I seem to have possessed, to cause such a muster of your forces in your fourfold epistle. There is strength in love, which does as much execution as silver trumpets and battering rams. In most cordial, sweet affection towards every one of you, including the lovely children, I subscribe your strongly attached sister and aunt,

MARY CAPPER.

Her brother Jasper had long been a severe sufferer from serious sickness. His mind was evidently fixed upon the Redeemer, though his poor mortal body was in much pain and affliction. He felt his foundation to be upon the Rock of ages. In the Twelfth month, 1819, he breathed his last. Mary Capper says, on this affecting occasion:—

"He was truly a precious brother! We were, I trust, joined in spirit, so that death cannot separate us. On the 9th of last month he very solemnly said, 'When my time is come, if I should say little or much, anything or nothing, I request it may be said, that I died, relying on the mercy of God through Christ Jesus;' and on the 11th, 'None but Jesus can do helpless sinners good, and I am one.' He was at that time very ill, but afterwards revived for a time. About a week before his death the pain, etc., having returned, he said, 'I never saw myself

den, and I think gratefully enjoyed the sun, in its brightness and cheerful influence on all around, not forgetting the bountiful Giver of all we enjoy. Bless the Lord! all ye who partake of His mercies, in all places, whether surrounded by the beauties of the country, or supported by His daily Providence in the noise of the town. O! the heart that trusts in Him can acknowledge His power to sustain in all lawful engagements.

Second month 6th. Called upon a young woman, not of our Society, whom I had before visited, when she was under the reducing effects of sickness, and when her mind was susceptible of good impressions. Returning health, youthful vivacity, with an attractive share of personal beauty, and mixing in gay, dissipating, fashionable amusements, and those frivolities which allure from seriousness, and fail not to mar the growth of holiness, have, I fear, for a time at least, laid waste the engaging loveliness of a humble and broken spirit; though there are still tokens of a tender mind. Dear young woman! my heart feels an interest in her true happiness, and I am well satisfied in having made the call, which she seemed to receive kindly, expressing her sense of the motive, with rising tears.

11th, First-day. In the morning meeting, Richard Burlingham spoke impressively; in the afternoon, a

Every day, for some time to come, will, I seem aware, add to your sense of it. Necessary arrangements arouse every tender emotion of the heart; scenes past, and sweet communion almost forgotten, revive with fresh interest. Link after link seems to be rapidly breaking; but there remains a soul-cheering belief, that although yet but faintly seen, and imperfectly understood, there is a union which cannot be broken! When you are shedding tears over the grave of our very dearly beloved one, calm resignation, and the assurance that his redeemed spirit is clothed with the righteousness of Christ, in whom he trusted as his Saviour, may be your stay and your strong consolation. Long have we known him as disclaiming every rag of self-righteousness. How often was his spirit broken and humbled! It is precious to remember these seasons.

Shortly before this solemn event, Mary Capper was engaged, under an impressive sense of religious duty, to visit the county jail and house of correction at Warwick; and she derived consolation from the remembrance, that the engagement was known and approved by her beloved brother, at a time when his spirit was so nigh to the haven of rest and of purity.

In a letter to her relatives, she thus alludes to the performance of this service:—

wont to be made, where the simple-hearted wait for an increase of understanding, to know and to keep in the paths of uprightness, that they may be at peace. These read the Holy Scriptures with reverence and lowliness of mind, that they may come unto the Light, the Life and the Way, whereof the Scriptures do testify, even Christ the Lord. We had our fears for this dear young woman, but parted in the tender clothing of Christian love.

16*th.* A day of much engagement. In the evening, sat with the heads of this family. How precious are the Lord's visitations! when received and cherished, how wonderfully does He, here and there, raise up servants and handmaids, to set forth His praise — to testify of His power and mercy.

17*th.* An unlooked-for opportunity occurred to express our interest for two young persons, for whom we had felt much when under their father's roof. This seemed a time of tenderness not to be lightly esteemed. Times of instruction, we may feelingly say, are in the hand of Him from whom all our mercies flow. Soon after dinner we left this kind, interesting family, and little circle of friends, with hearts united, I believe, in a bond of love and precious fellowship, strong and lasting, to endure so long as we continue upon the immutable foundation of Christian faith. We came to Alcester.

18*th*, *First-day*. In the afternoon a little company of serious neighbors sat down with us, and we may gratefully acknowledge that it was a precious season.

19*th*. Sat with the heads of the family where we dined; the children were not present, though some of them old enough. We thought it a privation; in some visits of this nature, we have had cause to believe that heavenly kindness was extended to the dear young children. We returned before tea, and sweetly enjoyed the domestic comfort of the family. How precious is Christian harmony and quietness of mind, when either the toils of life, or the duties of a day, are drawing to a close, without a bitter sting or restless anxiety! O! this is marvellous mercy! soul-satisfying reality! no idle tale! no cunningly-devised fable! May my soul, in unison with every humble believer, bless the Lord.

20*th*. I felt unwell, but set out, with my dear companion and helper, and I believe true burden-bearer. We had some distance to walk, to sit down with a widower and his sister; our feelings were those of lively sympathy; but hope shone, as a cheering ray, upon the way to obtain the crown immortal, at the close of the earthly pilgrimage, when we shall no more mourn the separation one from another. The one redeeming Lord and Saviour

worketh His own righteous work, in the humble, contrite heart.

21*st*. A precious meeting in the morning. In our little evening company, we had some beautiful Scripture reading, the concluding chapters of the Gospel of John. How pathetic, how convincing, to minds which resist not heavenly influence, is the language! setting forth the crucifixion, the resurrection, and the reappearance of Christ to his disconsolate disciples; as they were assembled together, "the doors being shut," he manifested himself in the midst. O! how graciously were we enabled, at this time, to comprehend something of this heavenly visitation, and to close, with sweetness, the evening of this day.

22*d*. After taking a serious and affectionate farewell of our kind friends, and of a valuable female servant who had waited on us, we went to Warwick, where we arrived about noon, and entered the neat, comfortable habitation of my endeared companion and friend, Hannah Evans. We were received with smiles of welcome by her sister and faithful servant, and are thankful for such an asylum, being weary and in want of rest.

After a few days repose at this place, my mind was unexpectedly tried and brought low. I trust I am not apt to seek, or to enter into important engage-

ments, without seriously pondering the subject in secret, ere I venture to open it even to my dearest friend or companion; but after some time of trial, and I may say distress, I thought it best to acquaint Hannah Evans, that I believed I must visit four poor unhappy men, recently committed to the county jail, for robbery and murder. This disclosure did not surprise my friend, for she had had a secret sense of the conflict of my mind, and this was helpful and encouraging to me. Thus I believe the dedicated mind is renewedly prepared for every fresh act of service, whether it be considered little or great. It is not having been helped in times past that will suffice or sustain; but through self-reduction and abasement, our confidence is afresh fixed upon the unfailing Helper of those who seek His divine direction and guidance.

26*th.* Suitable arrangements having been made, my kind friend Hannah Evans, and a few serious persons, accompanied me to the jail, where we were freely admitted. The mistress of this vast family, Esther Tatnal, being unwell, we were attended by her daughter, and by the gentlewoman who was with us on a former occasion. My mind was under a weighty concern, as we were conducted by the head turnkey into a clean, commodious room, where the four poor men were seated on a bench. The

turnkey then left us; it was a heart-affecting moment. First sat the desperate ringleader; then the brother of the unhappy woman who was executed for the murder of her mistress, and whom we visited three times within these walls; this poor fellow seems to have been drawn in by wicked companions; he is about twenty-five, and ignorant, but not unfeeling; he was greatly agitated on reference being made to his sister. We have been told that his afflicted mother died soon after hearing that he was committed under suspicion of being guilty of the same awful crime as his sister. Another of this wretched, deluded gang, also appears young; the fourth is middle-aged, and the father of several children; when his poor wife received the sad intelligence, she was taken ill and soon died, leaving a new-born babe. We understand that he was in an agony of distress, when his poor, destitute, helpless infant was brought to him, and that he said, "Had I followed my wife's advice, I should not have been in my present situation." They all sat very quietly, and seemed to attend seriously to what was expressed. We then took an affecting leave of them, under a mournful sense of human depravity. We had an impressive religious opportunity, in the chamber of E. Tatnal, whom I was concerned to find in a feeble state, her life being of public importance, as well as

private benefit. She knows, however, where to seek that which can sustain through every duty, and every affliction.

28*th.* The Monthly Meeting, when Hannah Evans returned her minute. There is nothing of which self can boast, but we can, in lowliness of mind, speak well of the gracious Power that helped and kept us, as we went along together in the work. I continue awhile with my dear friend, as my strength is much exhausted. Very tender is her care and attention, and I desire to be grateful for this, among many other favors bestowed.

Third month 4*th, First-day.* The morning meeting was small, our numbers being few, and some of these few, not rightly estimating their privileges, possibly not fully knowing them, often neglecting assembling with their friends for worship. The afternoon meeting was attended by many serious persons, who were invited to sit down with us, in our simple way. The opportunity was a relief to some who often feel a solicitude for the more universal spread of that righteousness which, we read in Scripture, is to cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.

8*th.* Many calling to see us, it proved something like taking a solemn farewell.

9*th.* This morning I left the house of my dear

friend and companion, Hannah Evans, and her domestic circle, from every one of whom I had received all the soothing kindness and attention which my feeble state required. I have now arrived safely at my own comfortable apartments in Dale End, Birmingham.

My heart craves a lowly, grateful and abiding sense of the Lord's manifold mercies.

13*th*. I was much gratified with the company of my dear niece M. and her husband; they were returning from visiting their relations in the south; it was to me an unexpected and interesting interview, and I think it was mutually endearing; my heart owns, and my hand records it as very precious to me; and I felt thankful for an apartment and a table furnished with things needful to refresh my dear relatives on their journey. We parted, as we had met, in the sweet feeling of love and harmony, but my mind seemed to tarry with them; they are young, and may live to see many days, and vicissitudes. One immutable truth will, I hope, be engraven on their hearts — the invincible power of God, revealed by grace in the heart, as brought to light by Jesus Christ, the Redeemer, the Saviour, by whom we come to know our own incapacity, and our need of a new heart, new thoughts and new affections — a knowledge hidden from those who are wise in their own conceits.

14*th*. Our Monthly Meeting, where I delivered in my certificate granted for the recent religious engagement. The best report I could give was the acknowledgment of heavenly condescension, unto which every faculty of my soul desires to be in subjection; yea, evermore, so be it!

MARY CAPPER TO A YOUNG MAN.

Third month 27*th*, 1821.

DEAR J. G.:—It is a precious thing to remember, and to be remembered by one another for good. Oft times, dear youth, have I remembered thee, and I am gratified by thy sweet token of affectionate regard toward me. If a union of Christian good-will can afford help, and surely there is strength in that love which wishes well to souls, thou art favored. Thy dear parents, thy Christian friends, all plead for thy establishment on the Rock, Christ Jesus, the Saviour sent into the world, clothed with humanity, to be crucified for the sin of the degenerate human race, who died, in His human nature; was chastised, smitten and bruised, for our sakes; bearing the iniquities of us all. O! who shall understand these things, except the Father reveal them. A Saviour crucified for our sins! a Saviour glorified for our justification! Flesh and blood cannot reveal this great mystery; but heavenly condescension opens

the understanding of the babes, the lowly and the simple in heart. It is not by human art and subtle reasoning, but as we become subjected, and receive the kingdom as little children, willing to be turned from the evil of our ways, our self-will, our selfishness in all its devices, that we can understand the love of God in Christ Jesus.

Often I think of thee; thou art not left to grope in the dark; the instruction of pious friends has been as line upon line, precept upon precept, extended towards thee; and to crown all, that light has arisen in thy heart, which is graciously given to the children of men to profit withal. I humbly hope it may shine more and more, unto the perfect day; to show thee the exceeding great love of God in Christ Jesus, who is revealed herein, to sanctify us throughout, in body, soul and spirit.

I think of thee, I trust, with a Christian interest; I think of thee as in the dawn of human life, full of warm energies, glowing, at times, with vivid expectations, even of temporal enjoyments. Thy human nature points at this, and urges the natural heart to press after this delusive happiness; we may look round about us, and see to what a mournful crisis this has brought thousands of our fellow-sojourners on this side the grave. Surely we may cherish the consoling belief, that a gracious God is dealing very

mercifully with thee, in pity for thy immortal spirit; He sends the gentle consumption of the body, to teach the heart wisdom.

Submit, dear youth, to the power of the indwelling Word of light and life; that searching, quick and discerning Word, unto which the Holy Scriptures do amply bear testimony, and of which we particularly read in the first chapter of the gospel records of the Apostle John.

I need not say more, and I hope I have not said too much, to testify my real good-will; thou hast, indeed, a place in my best love. My heart's desire is, that the end of our faith may be crowned with the salvation of our souls. Thy dear parents have a share in my best wishes. Farewell! whether we see each other again in mutability, or not, I do cordially and very affectionately subscribe, thy friend,

MARY CAPPER.

TO HANNAH EVANS.

Fourth month 29th, 1821.

MY PRECIOUS AND ENDEARED FRIEND:—United in the fellowship of the gospel, being partakers in measure of each other's consolations and trials, may our souls be possessed in patience, through drought and famine! I dare not for a moment harbor the thought that heavenly kindness has forsaken us,

however we may be tried, tossed and not comforted; it is, doubtless, a necessary discipline, a salutary chastening. In this I take courage, that nothing in heaven or earth can compare with a Redeemer's love and power, and "all the fitness He requireth is to feel our need of Him." Are we not, then, in this sense, claimants on His compassion, His mercy and His love? Never did I more fully feel it so. Thy friend,

MARY CAPPER.

TO THE SAME.

Fifth month 28th, 1821.

MY DEAR FRIEND: — Last week I was inclined to accept an invitation to visit a young woman who is a member of our religious Society, and who sometimes attends our meetings, but whose appearance, manners, etc., differ widely from the simplicity of our profession, and from that into which the pure spirit of Christianity leads. This dear young woman was deprived of her mother when a babe, left much to inconsiderate persons, and much indulged. No wonder, then, that submission to the restraining power of religion, to the cross of Christ, formed no part of her instruction; but the good Shepherd leaves us not thus to stray, wander and perish. With what heavenly kindness He seeketh that which is

turned out of the way! and healeth that which is wounded! Yea! hath long patience with that which is crooked. In lowly reverence, my heart ponders and admires the mercy and goodness extended to us all.

We have now an encouraging hope, that this young person is really under a deep consideration of things belonging to the soul's salvation, and I was comforted in this little visit. She has made a decided stand, and determined no more to frequent the theatre, or other places of diversion, though solicited by her companions, and even urged by those who ought to be the guardians of her youth. Instead of the fathers, children become teachers.

I observed, and perhaps a little entered into thy mournful anticipation, of the execution of the sentence on the three misguided, unhappy men, who suffered on sixth-day; so abiding was the feeling, that on seventh-day I called upon the distressed widow and family of B. I found her sorrowful, but not violent in the expression of her grief. She seemed to receive my visit just in the way I could wish; she said, and I believe she thought, it was very kind to call upon such a poor, afflicted, deserted family. She hoped, that as her husband had told her, he had made his peace with God. She asked if I would like to see his corpse. I secretly started, as

less there is a time to be athirst, in order that we may know how to estimate that which ministers refreshment and strength. Sound faith and love, patience and perseverance, are the cardinal points of a Christian traveller, after boxing the compass from side to side!

To the Same.

Birmingham, *Second month* 19*th*, 1822.

My Dear Friend:—I cherish the gladdening hope that thou wilt be here ere long, and am thinking of having a cleansing from the external defilement of smoke, etc., that no outward appearance may affright thee.

I think my soul longs for inward washing, purification, and entire redemption from all that defiles the inner temple of the heart, that the best of friends may dwell there. This entire sanctification through the Holy Spirit, how wonderful, how important! yet how neglected by many! and how slow in its progress when we think we are earnestly desiring it! Day by day, it seems, in my view, a marvellous work; and though at times I am cast down, I am not in despair, for I know in whom I have believed; although for a season He seems to hide Himself from our view, and then our hearts are sad; yet, are we not kept from presumptuous sins, meek and lowly?

desirable to the soul that has had a taste of the pure, sanctified joys of redeeming love. Hold fast thy lowly confidence, my precious friend; and may the great Restorer of all Righteousness be with us, at all times, and in all places! Do not exert thyself to write; I do not desire it. I am well satisfied that we have closely-attached hearts, and I trust we are both travelling on towards the end of all sin and sorrow, no more to feel sickness, cloud or doubt, or even animating hope; but to enjoy light, life and purity forever!

MARY CAPPER.

TO THE SAME.

BIRMINGHAM, *First month* 31*st*, 1822.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND, and fellow-traveller towards a land of promised rest, where human frailty, sickness, sorrow, and perplexing things, arising from ourselves or others, will no more offend. Let us press on, not as having yet attained, but looking forward, with strong faith in that invincible Power, whereby all our spiritual enemies may be subdued; yea, Satan trodden under our feet. Peradventure this may not be shortly, but surely, in due time; this my heart takes courage in believing; and the more we press after the pure river of life, the more we shall drink of its refreshing streams; neverthe-

less there is a time to be athirst, in order that we may know how to estimate that which ministers refreshment and strength. Sound faith and love, patience and perseverance, are the cardinal points of a Christian traveller, after boxing the compass from side to side!

To the Same.

Birmingham, *Second month 19th*, 1822.

My Dear Friend:—I cherish the gladdening hope that thou wilt be here ere long, and am thinking of having a cleansing from the external defilement of smoke, etc., that no outward appearance may affright thee.

I think my soul longs for inward washing, purification, and entire redemption from all that defiles the inner temple of the heart, that the best of friends may dwell there. This entire sanctification through the Holy Spirit, how wonderful, how important! yet how neglected by many! and how slow in its progress when we think we are earnestly desiring it! Day by day, it seems, in my view, a marvellous work; and though at times I am cast down, I am not in despair, for I know in whom I have believed; although for a season He seems to hide Himself from our view, and then our hearts are sad; yet, are we not kept from presumptuous sins, meek and lowly?

O! my precious friend, surely with some measure of experience, we can say, it is the Lord's doing; for our souls have been sore vexed. Thus I believe, in our different allotments, the Father of mercies, God only-wise, permits His children to be exercised and disciplined. To be humbled, and to keep humble, is not the work of human prudence. My dear love is to you all, as fellow-travellers, pressing after the mark. Doubtless, we often tenderly sympathize with each other; we have all equal need to watch and pray continually, though there is a difference in circumstances, situations and tempers; nevertheless, all is summed up in this — a Saviour, or I die! a Redeemer, or I perish!

MARY CAPPER.

The following was written, about this time, to her nieces, who had recently lost their last remaining parent: —

Sixth month, 1822.

I feel tenderly for you, my endeared nieces, as being yet comparatively in the morning of your Christian pilgrimage, and natural day; be thankful that you can believe, there is a secret gracious Power that keeps us from hardness of heart, and works in us, and for us, that sanctification which comes by the revealed love of God, in the manifestation of Jesus

the Redeemer, through the Holy Spirit. Keep lowly and watchful, that your steps may be rightly ordered, and the end will then be peace. Temptations gradually lose much of their power. Merciful kindness places the poor dependent believer, after a time of probation, in a state of comparative quiet, wherein the fulfilment of the will of a faithful Creator is his paramount desire. I wish thus to express myself, with real humility and caution; nevertheless, this is my present view of Christian advancement; and happy are they who hold on their way, through every successive stage, and persevere through every trial.

I passed through some exercise, in the prospect of leaving my quiet habitation, to be engaged for an uncertain length of time; but necessity seems laid upon me; the rest I must leave.

I hope your visit to Sunderland will be mutually beneficial and comforting. I have twice read the very interesting testimony respecting your precious mother; and though it appears long, I do not know what part could well have been omitted.

What a life of extensive usefulness! What unfeigned love, and what activity, to serve her fellow-probationers, under every name and circumstance! Above all, what an exemplification of that which the Spirit of Christ Jesus can work in the human heart!

subduing, sanctifying every thought and imagination; giving the victory over all, with a full sense and acknowledgment, that not unto us, but unto His Name belongeth the glory!

O! the humility, the wonderful patience, granted to your precious parents! May I reverently pray that our end may be like theirs! or, in the language of your redeemed mother, simply petition, "Thy will be done!" Here I desire to stay my mind, and be at peace.

Once more, my endeared relatives, may it be well with you in life, and in the hour of death, fervently desires your aunt,

MARY CAPPER.

Sixth month 12*th*. After secret prayer for right direction, and that a plain path might be opened before me, I ventured to inform my friends at the monthly meeting, that I had a view of some religious services within the limits of our quarterly meeting. In reverence, my spirit was bowed, and I believe there was a fellowship of feeling, and a desire to liberate me to pursue the path of apprehended requiring.

I think my heart's desire is, that all my steps may be ordered by that Power which alone can keep me, so that the evil one harm me not, and that no harm be done by me.

I passed some days quietly, in my own comfortable apartments, where I have all the accommodation I desire, and which I hope I willingly leave, when called upon so to do. I visited some poor neighbors, gave away tracts, wrote letters, and arranged all, so as to leave with calm satisfaction.

Seventh month 7th, First-day. We held two meetings for worship, at Harboro', in a meeting-house belonging to Friends; both gatherings filled the house. The clergyman of the parish said that he would give notice; and at the close of the morning meeting, his two very agreeable looking daughters came up to us, and invited us to dine at their father's, saying he would be pleased with our company. This is worthy of grateful remark, as manifesting the diminution of prejudice; and I think we should be thankful for every increase of Christian good-will, and in true lowliness of heart render the praise where alone it is due.

Unprofitable, indeed, is the labor of the servant, unless the Lord grant his blessing. May we watch and pray continually, lest, while we seem zealous for the good of others, we neglect our own hearts, and evil find an easy dwelling there! My spirit is often humbled under a sense of the possibility of thus falling, even after my heart may have been enlarged in love to my fellow-creatures, and my lips opened, in

some measure to set forth the love of our heavenly Father, and to invite sinners to repent, and to accept salvation. Much lowliness, and oft-times fear, have clothed my spirit.

11*th*. We were conveyed a little way into the country, to see some persons who have separated themselves from the religious Society of Friends and joined the Unitarians, and who are bringing up a large family in this way. Much Christian solicitude has been manifested, by divers Friends, toward them — the parents more especially, as being responsible for the instruction of the children. Little good seems, at present, to result from the care repeatedly extended, as respects the ground and foundation of faith. There seems to be a subtlety in argument, and in reference to certain Scripture testimonies, which, as yet, fortifies the heart; and if we are right who have strong consolation in believing on Jesus, as a Redeemer who shed His blood, a ransom for sinners, a propitiation for the sin of the world, our Mediator and Advocate with the Father, then there surely must be a veil over the spiritual understanding of these seceders; and nothing short of heavenly Power can convince and convert them. To pray for one another, with the best ability that we have, is a duty ever to be cultivated.

13*th*. Called on a poor old woman, who has for

some years been in outward darkness; her placid countenance, and lively sense of mercies received, in the midst of privations and sufferings, seemed to do us good, and to confirm our belief, that the Fountain of pure light and of consolation is revealed, without partiality, in the seeking, humble heart. This belief is precious and cheering.

19*th.* Visited a poor widow in affliction; her calm resignation was striking; also her confidence that her heart will be sustained in peace through all; and that, if bread and water only be her lot, she shall be content, and commend her family to the Lord. Surely this is the blessed effect of the power of religion on the mind! We called on William White, a Friend far advanced in age; he lives in great simplicity, with a grandson who works as a shoemaker; without female aid, the house is comfortable, neat and orderly. The grandfather is provider and head cook, and they appear to eat their bread in quietness, and to be cheerful. It was very pleasant to see a youth, of really pleasing person and manners, contented to follow a humble occupation, in a retired village, and to live in a very lowly way, with his aged grandfather.

20*th.* After a day of retirement in spirit, and of secret prayer for renewed direction, and continued help in our Christian movements, I thought we were

favored, in sitting in the evening with J. L. and his wife, with a sweet and encouraging sense, that the stream of heavenly life flows soft and sure, to the refreshment of the retired, waiting soul, though we may again and again thirst and be weary.

27*th.* A day of close engagement. After dinner we went to Stow; and on to Morton, to call on a poor woman who was born and educated in our Society, but who married out of it. Friends had visited her frequently, and kindly cared for her. When we entered the little cottage, our surprise was great to find that the poor woman had breathed her last about midnight; and that on third-day (this being seventh) her husband, on coming out of his garden, where he had been digging potatoes, fell from his chair and expired, without speaking. It was an impressive scene, to behold a husband and wife thus lying lifeless in one chamber; they were about seventy-seven years of age, and had lived harmoniously together about fifty years. We sat down with a few of the kind neighbors, who had waited upon this feeble pair. The little religious opportunity was consoling; for a calm belief seemed to clothe my spirit, that, as their lowly hearts had been united in life, so, in death, their spirits were not separated.

Eighth month 4th. Went to Arnscot, where a Friends' meeting is annually held; it was large. My

mind was in a tried state, though mercifully kept patient; and I was thankful for the labors of some dear friends, who had to speak of the efficacy of the grace of God, revealed in the heart to cleanse from all sin, when believed in, cherished and obeyed, and purifying from evil thoughts, words and works. Christ died to save us from our sins, and not in them. O, the importance of every heart coming to know Jesus, in His spiritual appearance, sitting as a refiner with fire, and as a fuller with soap! It is mournful that many religious professors seem to remain at ease in a nominal profession, with but little of that sense of sin, in all its deceitfulness, which is discovered by the shining of the true Light in the heart. Many seem content to be thought moral and respectable; but this falls far short of coming unto Him whose gracious consoling invitation stands on Scripture record, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden!" with the precious promise, that they shall find rest. All other rest is polluted.

10*th*. Had a very comforting time with dear Hannah Palmer, in her eighty-ninth year; her natural and spiritual faculties lively. It was inexpressibly sweet and refreshing to feel an undoubted evidence, that there was no cloud in her way; nothing to separate the soul from God; no distrust or unbe-

lief; but confidence that, by the new and living Way, Christ Jesus, there was, and is, free access to the Father. Marvellous mercy! the work of redeeming love! We took tea with a widow who has many trials; the little circle of Friends, in this retired, quiet spot, are not without their distresses. It is well to visit such in their own dwellings, and possibly some good may arise from passing a few days among them. This evening we had a precious little sitting with a poor man, at the close of his hard day's labor, in the harvest-field; his spirit was so tendered, that the floor was wet with his tears. Ah! these are times of special favor.

16*th*. We visited an aged, infirm couple, in a very poor dwelling; we may observe, that when individuals among us lightly esteem their privileges, and turn their backs upon them, in the early period of life, their advancing years are often marked with distress, and the want of those comforts which they might have had; nevertheless, in this case, we had to admire the enduring mercy, extended even to old age; the cheering rays of light, and of saving love, breaking in upon them, as in the eleventh hour, in their poor desolate dwelling; this is marvellous love indeed! We afterwards visited another of these poor forlorn ones, in his old age. He lives with a daughter-in-law, who has a large family, and who

seemed to have her hands and her mind full of cares and encumbrances. She looked rather shy upon us at first; but after a little free discourse, and some little acts of kindness, the clouds began to dissipate, and I felt a flow of tenderness toward her; viewing her as encumbered with many things, and possibly unacquainted with "that good part," needful for keeping the spirit calm, and all things in subjection. After a time, she was informed, that the object of our visit was, to sit down quietly with her father-in-law, who was present; and she was invited to sit with us, which she readily did, with several of her children. The free and unchanging love of our heavenly Father broke in upon us. Wonderful is His mercy and goodness! The dear children were quiet, and the poor woman melted into tears. We left her under much feeling, and upon our telling her, that there was likely to be a meeting for the inhabitants on first-day evening, she said she should be glad to attend. Thus can the precious love of God soften obdurate hearts! In the afternoon, we had a time of sweet retirement with James Bissel, in his humble dwelling, where he has lived in solitary widowhood upwards of twenty years; he is eighty years old, and his children have settled at a distance. It is admirable to witness the peaceful content, the comfort, neatness and order, of

some of these solitary ones; and how little suffices for nature's real wants, where the mind has happily found the true anchor.

17*th.* I feel both weak and low; but through adorable mercy, I still go on, from day to day, in bowedness of spirit, I trust, so as to bring no condemnation, nor grieve the pure mind in any. If this be the case, I may be content, and render thanksgiving.

25*th, First-day.* Our minds were, I believe, afresh humbled with the prospect of the day opening before us; quiet resignation is the best preparation for whatever may be brought upon us. After breakfast and the Scripture reading, I was constrained to express something, by way of stimulating to good order in sitting down to meals; that we may be favored, in our short pauses at such times, to participate also in renewed refreshment of spirit. Paying but a slight regard to these moments, allowed in a family, for individual, secret breathing to the Fountain of all our rich supplies, temporal and spiritual, is attended with great loss. There is a danger of the lamp of life, in a spiritual sense, becoming dim, and even being extinguished, by the cares of this life. The deep work of regeneration, redemption and entire sanctification, is not sufficiently the object of Christian professors. — The

meeting in the morning was small; in the evening there was a very large attendance, and the meeting closed under a reviving hope that mercy and goodness were over us.

To one of her Nieces.

Ninth month 12th, 1822.

I have no discouraging language to hold forth; very marvellous, in my view, is the mercy that redeemed my life from destruction, and withholdeth not His goodness in my old age.

Prize your privileges, my beloved relatives! nurtured in the pure principles of gospel Truth, the unsophisticated religion of Jesus! My heart, my understanding, my every faculty, is satisfied with the pure principles professed by the Society, in their first powerful promulgation, and as I now believe them to be, held by the honest, simple and pure in heart, and the faithful in word and deed, among us. To be united to such a Society; to know the Foundation and living Corner Stone! ah! my soul, what is there comparable to this! not the increase of corn, wine or oil, or of any worldly possessions! With these views, my precious relatives, I do, at times, feel a gentle constraint to leave my own home comforts, which I highly value, and to go from place to place, and from family to family,

with a heartfelt desire, so far as ability is given, to stir up the pure mind, which is liable, you know, to be oppressed, hardly rising, at times, above visible objects. Alas! how few come clean out of selfishness, and of the spirit and defilements of the world! Far am I from writing thus, as having overcome, but my heart's strong desire is to press on; not looking too much at discouraging things, past, present or to come; but with a steady faith to put my trust in that Power which can subdue all that stands in the opposition. O! how does the Lord instruct us to live above perishing things, even His goodly gifts. How are we led along, as we can bear it! Thus, in all things, we may gather instruction, leaving such as we understand not to a future day.

MARY CAPPER.

CHAPTER IX.

RELIGIOUS SERVICES IN AND ABOUT LONDON — LETTERS, ETC.

In the year 1823, Mary Capper received a certificate from her Monthly Meeting, for religious service in and near London. The limits of our small volume will not admit of more than occasional extracts from her interesting memoranda.

At Tottenham, she says, under date of Eighth month, 14th: —

Went to meeting with my nephew and his children. My mind was deeply affected with a sense, that Christian believers must know a breaking down, ere they can experience a building up, in the heavenly power, on Christ the chief Corner Stone, elect, precious. All other foundations must be razed — not one stone left!

Ninth month 23*d*. Called on a tender-spirited, pious man, not professing with our Society; he is afflicted with bodily weakness, though in the meridian of life; his wife and daughter were with us, and we had a sweet little season of favor together, in

oneness of faith and of spirit, I believe. O, how precious is this! strangers to one another, dwelling far apart upon earth, brought to acknowledge together the wonderful power of our God!

28*th, First-day.* In the morning meeting I found relief, in the expression of my firm belief in Christ crucified, as the Reconciler of fallen man to the favor of God; that in Him, our glorified Saviour, we have redemption, and acceptance with the Father; and that there is no other foundation than this which is already laid.

Tenth month 19*th, First-day.* At Southwark meeting. O! how I did desire that we might not be a superficial people, nor be satisfied with a nominal religion, but that we might, in sincerity, humility and earnestness, seek and find Jesus of Nazareth, the crucified Saviour of the world; the Redeemer and the Mediator, by whom alone we can draw near to the Father. Oh! this important truth; how it presses upon my spirit, in meetings and in many companies. I fear it is not sufficiently pondered in the heart.

First month 21*st,* 1824. Accompanied Sarah Foster to Plaistow Monthly Meeting, whence Elizabeth Fry took me to Plashet, where a room was allotted to me, to pursue my own occupations, or join the family as best suited me. Their family party is

large. I usually dined and took tea with the children, and joined the family in the evening. I endeavored to be present at the morning reading of the Scriptures, which was mostly an impressive time. Sometimes I had the privilege of Elizabeth Fry's company in my apartment; but almost every hour of her time is importantly occupied, in benevolent exertions for the poor and miserable; much depravity comes under her notice.

What should we do, if the foundation on which a believer's faith is built were not sure! but it is confirmed to us by the living Power that cannot fail; "the foundation of God standeth sure." Rest, O! my soul, in this, although storms may arise. Ah! ye poor benighted sinners, may Light mercifully beam on your souls, and bring conviction for sin.

Third month 12*th.* We were conveyed in a carriage, as far as it could safely go, and then walked to the humble dwelling of a poor Friend; and while sitting with her, by her little fireside, I think we had afresh to believe, that the great Giver of all our mercies condescends to comfort those who seek Him, and who trust in Him. Among the hidden ones, the poor and the lonely, we have at times been refreshed together with what is far better than all that this world can give. We also visited a family, some of whom were not members of our Society; we

met with a kind reception, particularly from the husband, whose mind is very susceptible of good impressions. It is not a name, neither is it forms, nor the relinquishing of outward forms, which can bring us into possession of the inward and spiritual grace. A new life, a spiritual creation, a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness, are the genuine effects of believing in Christ, of cherishing and obeying the teachings of His Spirit. We paid a very interesting visit to an old man in Trinity Almshouses, who had been a pilot in early life; he has a very neat, commodious, quiet retreat here. I think he married out of our Society. He is much respected, and his appearance is very striking; he is eighty years old, a fine, manly figure, with an animated countenance; he has long been painfully afflicted; yet he appears patient and contented, and manifested tenderness and feeling, with a grateful sense of the blessings continued to him. He expressed thankfulness that he was remembered and visited by Friends, whose meetings he attended as long as his infirmities would allow. — In the evening, we sat down with Joseph Fry and family. There is a uniting power in religious fellowship, which diminishes not with time. — This brings us near the conclusion of our present engagement; no great things have been attempted; if we have been in the way

of our duty, I believe we desire no more; a peaceful acquittal will be a sufficient recompense for our small labors.

To Hannah Evans.

Clapham, *Fourth month 17th*, 1824.

My Beloved Friend: — I send thee J. J. Gurney's new publication on the peculiarities, etc., of our religious Society; perhaps thou hast not met with it; I wish our young Friends may patiently read it, but it requires attentive perusal. I also send some extracts from letters of Hannah Kilham, etc. I wish some liberal-minded Friends in the country, who devise liberal things, would read the reports, and find their hearts disposed to add their names to the subscribers, or transmit a donation. I think it would be a source of satisfaction, upon serious reflection, in days yet to come.

Never, I think, my endeared friend, did I more feel the force of the words, "rejoice with trembling." Every returning day and hour brings some proof of weakness, some disclosure of what is hidden in the heart; unlooked-for circumstances arise to ruffle or disturb us. O! how pure is that calm, that peace which descends from the spirit of the Lord! How different from the spirit of the world, from unsanctified self, from the unsubdued natural temper! The state of my own heart leads to these reflections, and

to the earnest prayer, that I may maintain the watch against the cruel enemy.

Farewell, affectionately, my dear friend. Thine,

MARY CAPPER.

Fourth month 18*th*, *First-day*. A day of serious engagement. Oh! for an increase of spirituality, and more entire sanctification. My anchor of hope is in the Redeemer, to cleanse from all sin.

19*th*. Came to Clapton. The weather is mild, and the country beautiful, yet my spirit seems sad, and I am poorly; but I ever think it right to cherish a lively hope and consolation in the mercy of God, in graciously providing a Mediator, a Saviour! Without this hope, this consoling faith, what should I, what could I, do.

22*d*. Was gratified in walking, with a little party, to Tottenham meeting. Our long devoted and experienced friend, Thomas Shillitoe, spoke with feeling and earnestness, on the subject of entire resignation, or subjection, to the will of our Heavenly Father; that its effects were peace. Probably few are better qualified to elucidate this subject; as his life seems devoted to the fulfilment of apprehended duty.

Fifth month 19*th*. Women's Yearly Meeting. A full gathering, and something like a fresh evidence

that we are still a people waiting on the Lord for His blessing.

20*th.* A testimony was read concerning James Birch. It set forth a character remarkable for simplicity; faithful to the Grace or Light of Christ manifested in the soul, which, as it is obeyed, will ever be found powerful to regulate throughout, and to sustain the soul in every conflict in life, and in the hour of death, as this dear Friend did experience. There was also a testimony respecting Elizabeth Foster I knew her in former years; she was of a lively turn of mind, which, at that day, almost revolted at the idea of the sufferings needful to subdue the will, and bring all into subjection; but the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit wrought the great change, and brought low all that was lifted up, or opposed to the cross of Christ. She could declare her experience of the marvellous mercy of God, in Christ Jesus, and she closed her day in peace.

In the afternoon an impressive testimony was read, setting forth the early dedication, exemplary life, and peaceful death, of Mary Hanbury, in her twenty-fifth year — the only child of William Allen. Many young minds seemed affected, and I thought the desire prevailed, that the purifying Word of power might do the same great work of sanctifica-

tion for all of us. A precious time of stillness succeeded; and then a recommendation to be serious and retired in spirit, and earnest in watchfulness and prayer.

21*st.* Much was expressed, setting forth our faith in the Scripture doctrines, concerning the propitiatory Sacrifice, etc.

27*th.* Our honorable and aged friend, Mary Proud, was enabled, under much bodily weakness, in the strength afforded, to kneel, and powerfully to commend the keeping of our souls to the mighty power of a faithful Creator. The concluding minute was read and after a solemn pause, we separated.

To R. and E. C.

Warwick, *Seventh month* 3*d*, 1824.

My Dear Friends: — I was safely conveyed hither on fourth-day, and dear H. E. received me with cordial affection. She is looking worn and poorly; her dear sister, R. Lamley, is in a weak state, though somewhat revived. Her countenance is wonderfully bright, expressive, I think it may be said, of a spirit redeemed from evil; her conversation is sweetly innocent, about the place where angels dwell, although she thinks that a cloud veils these glorious things from her. Ah! it is precious to believe that this veil of human infirmity will, ere very

long, be rent, and an entrance given into the everlasting city, where the Lord God and the Lamb are the light thereof.

My mind is calm; no distressing retrospect. I trust I may safely say, I am satisfied with the secret evidence that my gracious Lord condemns me not. O! 'tis His favor that keeps in peace, resigned, and even thankful to be numbered among those who partake of the tribulations of the gospel, and who are, at times, permitted to rejoice in hope that consolations will more and more abound, letting patience have her perfect work. I could not manifest to my dear friends what I felt, at once more being permitted to see their faces. It was not insensibility; it was not diminished affection, or diminished interest in that which binds us as links in one chain. Do tell this to such of my dear friends as I might seem to overlook.

I have no evil tidings to report; whatever may be mingled in the cup of the true believer in the mercy of God in Christ Jesus, all will be well; and in the end, life, light and glory will arise and shine forever!

Farewell, dear friends. Your affectionate friend and fellow-sojourner,

MARY CAPPER.

To Hannah Evans.

Dale End, *Seventh month 29th*, 1824.

My very Kind Friend: — Thy last communication has been cheering to me; to learn that weakness and infirmities are borne with meek endurance and resignation, is precious, as a confirmation that heavenly help is nigh, even that power whereby Divine Grace triumphs over human nature. Doubt it not, my Christian friends; I dare not question, or doubt it; "That which has helped us hitherto, will help us all our journey through." Naked faith, without claim of merit in ought that we can do, is the anchor of my soul. O! what a mercy, in old age, to rest in redeeming love; a Saviour crucified; a Saviour glorified! May we happily be among those who centre here.

When thou seest E. Tatnal, my Christian love is to her, with the expression of the animating hope that she will be helped to hold on in well-doing. I remember the poor female prisoners with very tender feeling.

Very affectionately, I subscribe,

Mary Capper.

TO R. AND S * * * *.

Eleventh month 19*th*, 1824.

MY KIND YOUNG FRIENDS:—While I decorated my windows and little apartment with the yet remaining beauties of a rich and luxuriant summer, how could I do otherwise than think of the great, benevolent Power that liberally bestows, and fits the awakened mind to enjoy the outward blessings that surround us! Even in the smoky, dense atmosphere of active commerce, and busy streets, there are times of cheering reflection, and transient views of happier, purer scenes than we can now see. I am sometimes favored to participate in a glimpse of that renovation, that new creation, wherein old things shall have passed away, and we, being born again, shall rejoice in the new heaven and the new earth.

Thus I thought of you, as your kind attention furnished me with the means of present gratification. The flowers are fresh and beautiful. Accept my very affectionate acknowledgment, and my heart-felt desire, that lowliness of mind, sweet peace, and assurance forever may crown all.

With tenderness and love, I subscribe,

MARY CAPPER.

CHAPTER X.

ACCOUNT OF HER LAST JOURNEY WITH CERTIFICATE AS A MINISTER — EXTRACTS FROM HER DIARY — DEATH OF HER FRIEND, HANNAH EVANS.

THE last journey on a religious account for which Mary Capper felt concerned to ask for a certificate from her monthly meeting, was in the year 1826, to visit the meetings and families of Friends in Derbyshire, Notts, and some parts of Leicestershire. In reference to this she says: "Increase of years wears down the powers of nature, but sometimes I marvel at the activity of my little weakly frame, shaken as it has frequently been, through the long space of seventy years! and even now, I seem like a child beginning to learn the perfect will concerning me. Sometimes light arises out of darkness; and simple dedication, with the little strength that I have, seems the way to obtain peace. Thus, after a time of much reduction of body and mind, with a little revival of strength, a prospect which I have had at times for some years, has revived. The undertaking seems great; I have indeed felt it so; almost enough to overwhelm my weak powers; but I am not my own,

and the time draws on when all sacrifices will be over, and redeeming Love be all in all! The unity of my friends is helpful to me."

About the same time she thus writes to a beloved friend: —

BIRMINGHAM, *Third month 7th*, 1826.

My affectionately and truly-interested fellow-traveller in a path hidden from human view, and with which the worldly selfish spirit has no fellowship! Thy feelingly communicated letter of sympathy, it is almost needless for me to say, is as a refreshing stream, proceeding from the inexhaustible Fountain, that sends forth its pure water, far and wide, into the low vallies and thirsty ground. Much as I have been reduced, in body and in mind, I am satisfied with the lowly calm that is afforded, and in which I feel no discouragement, but am ready to say, It is enough. Yet I feel a solemn seriousness, in the view of opening my concern to my friends to-morrow at our monthly meeting. I have had a little conference with my dear friend, Rachel Lloyd, whom I esteem as a worthy elder and mother in the church. Though, my beloved friend, I perhaps know but little of the peculiar circumstances that are now permitted to try thy faith, yet can I, dare I, doubt the sufficiency of that Almighty Power that has been with thee all thy life long? Did not Mercy watch

over our childish days, and the yet more dangerous years of youth, when vivacity and inexperience led towards evil, which might have embittered our growing years? This Mercy follows us still; it is our hope and stay to this day; our all in all!

8*th*. A certificate is ordered to be brought to our next monthly meeting for me, as friends have expressed unity with my prospect; so far my spirit seems relieved. In precious fellowship with thee, my dear friend, farewell!

MARY CAPPER.

1826.—*Third month* 26*th*. It is a precious privilege to have spiritual unity, and secret fellowship, in hidden trials and provings of faith. Christian pilgrims have their sufferings; how else should they be disciples of a crucified Lord? and if we look around, on those who turn their back upon spiritual sorrows, is there any trouble like unto worldly sorrow? Wave upon wave, a troubled sea; and no powerful Word, to speak, Peace, be still! Every tender feeling within us may compassionate the various sufferers of this day; the monied men, the manufacturer, and the laborer, are all involved in the present far-spreading dismay.

In the Fourth month she arrived at Nottingham, and attended the quarterly meeting. The meeting

was large, though she says: "As in other places, the deeply-experienced fathers and mothers are but few. A rising generation must learn for themselves to sit at the feet of Jesus, and be taught in the way of the cross."

Fourth month 29*th.* Sat with two sisters in declining years; I thought the quickening life or power seemed at the lowest ebb that I had known, in retirement of this kind, since I came here. A young man afterwards sat down with me, and I believe something arose like life answering to life. This is marvellous! when light is thus permitted to shine out of darkness. In the evening, sat with a family, in solemn, quiet waiting for the renewed revelation of the light and life of Christ in the soul. O! how different this from lifeless form, or any outward dependence! how pure the desire to acquaint ourselves with that great and glorious Power that worked out our salvation, in us and for us! Yea! how chastened are our sorrows, how subdued our anxieties, our every trouble and care, when we can be truly resigned to the will of Him who ruleth over all, and doeth all things well! This little season has left a sweet savor.

30*th*, *First-day.* Before I rose, a grateful sense of past favors contrited my spirit, and raised the secret prayer, that the unseen but sustaining Arm

may continue to direct my steps; that no presumption, no unwatchfulness, no neglect of prayer, may be permitted to misguide or delude me. When we met, in our little circle, to breakfast, there seemed a remaining dew, after a time of refreshing; and we had again a sweet token that the Lord's mercies are new, every morning. Our more public gathering for worship was, I hope, a spiritual benefit to some; but the want of united diligence, and inward watchfulness, for the arising of light, of life, and of prayer, is surely a hindrance from that approach unto God, which the quickened soul thirsts after.

"O! Thou that hearest prayer, unto Thee shall all flesh come!" All have need of prayer. "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, I will hear from heaven and forgive!"

Jesus, the Saviour, though without sin, prayed oft-times, as we read in the Scriptures; He enjoined His disciples, and all that believe in, and follow Him, to watch and pray, that they enter not into temptation. The Spirit of the Lord teacheth us to pray as we ought, though words may not be spoken.

Fifth month 7th, First-day. At both meetings. With reverence I record it! my spirit was clothed with lowly dependence on that Power whence all our

sure mercies come; and again I thought a ray of light mildly shone out of darkness, and I saw that it was good to be patient under humiliation, wherein a willingness is wrought in us to suffer with those, who, in their several stations in the spiritual family, are laboring for the fresh arising of life and power in our meetings. As we are a people who profess to have no dependence on outward ministrations, we, above all other Christians, have need to cherish the spirit of prayer, and an inward, reverent waiting for the renewal of our faith, and for ability to worship aright, and to walk worthy of our profession from day to day; otherwise our meetings are dull, heavy and vain pretensions.

11*th.* I thought the meeting was favored with the overshadowing of that mercy which is ancient and new; but here, as in other places, there are comparatively few who make the necessary sacrifices to attend these religious meetings in the middle of the week; of course, there is a great individual loss of that spiritual consolation which would renew the best life.

13*th.* Fervently prayed to be kept in the path of duty, humble and simple hearted, in no way presuming upon what I may think I know, or ever have known. — Paid a visit to an aged man, in very precarious health, yet cleaving to life; his earthly pos-

sessions, it is to be feared, are somewhat like chains, which fetter the spirit. O! I hope these bonds may be loosed.

21*st*, *First-day*. A large gathering. Love to souls, in the offers of redemption from the bondage of sin, and of sanctification, with access to the Throne of Mercy, by Christ, the new and living Way to the Father, was a little opened; and counsel given to servants to be faithful in their different stations, not as eye-servants; with some encouragement, to the sufferers in the troubles of the present times, to endeavor after patient submission; and that there may be a serious search, how far any had lightly esteemed the Lord's mercies, in a day of comparative prosperity. It may be, these very things which seem against us, may eventually work for good. I thought the meeting closed with solemnity.

23*d*. Walked a considerable distance, to visit a poor family; I found the mother, an aged Friend, with two daughters, in a small room, all that they had, except a shop below it; they were washing. On entering this little dwelling, I thought there was a sweet consoling evidence that the Son of Peace was there; more precious than the odor of rich perfumes, or than the rare curiosities which adorn the apartments of the affluent. I was thankful, and well repaid for bodily toil.

long, be rent, and an entrance given into the everlasting city, where the Lord God and the Lamb are the light thereof.

My mind is calm; no distressing retrospect. I trust I may safely say, I am satisfied with the secret evidence that my gracious Lord condemns me not. O! 'tis His favor that keeps in peace, resigned, and even thankful to be numbered among those who partake of the tribulations of the gospel, and who are, at times, permitted to rejoice in hope that consolations will more and more abound, letting patience have her perfect work. I could not manifest to my dear friends what I felt, at once more being permitted to see their faces. It was not insensibility; it was not diminished affection, or diminished interest in that which binds us as links in one chain. Do tell this to such of my dear friends as I might seem to overlook.

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Farewell, dear friends. Your affectionate friend and fellow-sojourner,

MARY CAPPER.

To Hannah Evans.

Dale End, *Seventh month 29th*, 1824.

My very Kind Friend: — Thy last communication has been cheering to me; to learn that weakness and infirmities are borne with meek endurance and resignation, is precious, as a confirmation that heavenly help is nigh, even that power whereby Divine Grace triumphs over human nature. Doubt it not, my Christian friends; I dare not question, or doubt it; "That which has helped us hitherto, will help us all our journey through." Naked faith, without claim of merit in ought that we can do, is the anchor of my soul. O! what a mercy, in old age, to rest in redeeming love; a Saviour crucified; a Saviour glorified! May we happily be among those who centre here.

When thou seest E. Tatnal, my Christian love is to her, with the expression of the animating hope that she will be helped to hold on in well-doing. I remember the poor female prisoners with very tender feeling.

Very affectionately, I subscribe,

Mary Capper.

sure to suffer for Him, we shall in due time reign or triumph over His enemies and ours.

Sixth month 2d. One of my young friends accompanied me to the almshouses; six occupied by Friends, and six by females not of our Society. "A place for everything, and everything in its place," seems here exemplified; and that but little room is actually needful, where there is good order. All was neat and clean; and I thought I could live, content and thankful, in such a spot, with the love of God, and a sense of His mercy in Christ Jesus.

4th, First-day. In the meetings, painful apprehensions arose that some were not humble enough; that they had notions and ways of their own choosing; disputations and cavils about Scripture doctrines, and the simple testimonies of experienced Christians, who declare the Truth as it is in Jesus. When thus tried, it is well to wait till discernment is granted, so as to divide the word aright. I hope seasonable caution and counsel were feelingly delivered. I took tea with a dear old Friend, and we had a refreshing time together. The spirit of prayer seemed to be poured forth; now that I am retired to my chamber, the close of the evening, in the outward, appears beautiful; the setting sun is bright, and all around is calm; nature is clothed in tints of

glory and loveliness. O! for such a final close, spiritually, when the soul shall quit these changing scenes.

8*th*. Took tea with one of the Friends at the almshouses; these little, neat, quiet dwellings and humble inhabitants, seem peculiarly suited to my present frame of spirit. Godliness with contentment truly is great gain. Most of the inmates appear to prize their happy lot, and to live in peace and good-will, assisting one another, as need requires, in sickness, etc. I called on two infirm, afflicted women, not members of our Society; one of them had kept her bed for two years. This dear old disciple spoke, with tenderness of spirit, of mercies in the midst of long-continued helplessness and pain, and said she would not exchange her situation with the young, the healthy, and the thoughtless; her firm belief was, that when the right time came, her Lord would take her unto Himself. Another poor woman appeared patient under much suffering, and expressed her desire to be resigned to her good Master's will, He being very merciful, and comforting her. This confirmed me in the belief that the God of consolation is with the poor, in their solitary dwellings. This charitable institution is a noble instance of liberality, having been built and endowed by a townswoman, who had accumulated property by keeping an

inn; and having often entertained Quakers at her house, she generously provided for some of the poor among them; she likewise appointed members of our Society as trustees.

A portion of this journey was through a beautiful locality called the Peak country, diversified by many wonders of nature. Hills, dales and caverns afforded ample scope for entertainment and instruction. Of this she says: "Although other views occupy my mind, I cannot but see and admire the beauties of nature."

The Monthly Meeting was held at the Bridge Inn, Matlock. She says: "I thought it a time of encouragement, and of tender feeling with one another in our different allotments. If I am but kept in reverence and godly fear, filling up my appointed duties, doing neither more nor less than is required, and acting under Divine teaching and power, it is enough; this is the daily concern of my heart, at home and abroad. We were somewhat disturbed by a noisy, indecorous party of young people; and as they sat with the door open, I just stepped in and civilly asked if they would give me leave to offer a few tracts. They were civil in return, answering, 'Yes, surely;' but they appeared young and thoughtless. I spoke a few words seriously to them, to which they listened with attention, and they were after-

wards more quiet in their behavior. On our leaving the inn, I observed some of them reading; possibly a little hint dropped, even to the giddy, under feelings of tender compassion, may not be altogether lost."

One of the evidences given in the glorious advent of Christianity, of the genuineness of the new and last dispensation was, that to the poor the gospel was preached.

A tender concern of this kind often filled the heart of Mary Capper, and she frequently records the gathering of the servants in families that she visited; that to them the love of our Heavenly Father, who created all for glory, and is calling all to virtue, might be spoken of, and the Holy Spirit of Christ declared, which is a light to lead out of darkness and ignorance.

On one occasion she records: "The chapter in the Scriptures which was read in the morning, was succeeded by a solemn pause, during which the truths that we had heard seemed to open a view of the awful effects of disobedience, hardness of heart, and unbelief, from whence proceed all imaginable wickedness, and deeds of darkness; turning from this dismaying scene to where Light, Life and Mercy shine, and are followed by acts of obedience, how cheering, how consoling, is the hope set before us!"

Seventh month 29th. I may thankfully say, I have been helped every way, as occasion required; and I consider as a peculiar favor, the calmness which clothes my mind. There is much instruction in the various dealings of our Heavenly Father, in order to convince us of our sinfulness, and of our need of redemption through the atoning sacrifice. How variously, and how wonderfully, the work of repentance and faith is begun and carried on, if not wilfully rejected, even in the heart of the poor, the solitary, and the unlearned in this world's wisdom! Up and down, where I have been, sickness, affliction and trouble seem to have been the means of spiritual instruction, by loosening the strong bond of natural attachment to earthly things.

Eighth month 2d. In a solid meeting for worship, I took a Christian farewell of my friends, in much tenderness. In the evening, came about six miles, to a place where I was cordially received, into a large family of children and grandchildren.

3*d.* Accompanied my friend to the village, to make calls on the sick and poor. I thought, as we sat to wait upon the Lord with a poor cottager, that there was a heart-humbling sense of heavenly kindness, as a token of acceptance of this almost solitary, and in the view of high professors, this despicable way of seeking the Lord.

4*th*. The morning chiefly occupied in private retirement, and serious conversation. This was succeeded by some trial, there being a large mixed company at dinner. It was rather a thoughtless assemblage; and although not designedly indecorous, mirth and levity became irksome to some of us. I ventured, with deference to the master of the house, to ask leave to make a few observations, and a becoming quietness ensued. I then expressed my ideas of rational cheerfulness, and of a grateful participation of the bounties liberally bestowed for our bodily refreshment, which no human skill could produce, seeing that no man can cause a grain of wheat to grow and fructify; shall we then eat and drink, and forget the Power that supplies our need! Something of this sort was said, and listened to with a degree of attention; and possibly it may recur at a future day. I felt much for my kind friend, whose situation appeared to me very trying. In the evening we went together to the village, and sat down in a cottage; many came in and behaved quietly, and I felt an openness for expressing something on the faith and practice of our Society. We parted in cordial good-will.

14*th*, *First-day*. Sat with a pious poor man from the country; there are several of this class who

attend our meetings, and I think they help to keep alive the sacred flame of devotion among us.

16*th*. Went six miles to visit the Moravian settlement at Ockbrook. S. F. Church is connected with our family through my Aunt Chase; he and his wife were truly kind, and I felt a secret unity of spirit with them, which is beyond names and forms. We separated in love, and a sweetness, best known to Christian believers, as being one in heart, seeking the Lord Jesus.

17*th*. The meeting at Derby proved a time of solemn parting; my heart was contrited in a view of the steps that I had been led to take. Goodness and mercy have kept me staid upon my best Helper, eternal in the heavens; and my spirit bows, in reverence and thankfulness, as with my mouth in the dust, believing that it is of the Lord that no condemnation disturbs my lowly peace.

20*th*, *First-day*. Loughborough. The neighbors being invited, a large number came to meeting in the evening. I was surprised at the extension of condescending mercy, in opening gospel doctrine, and Scripture testimony, respecting the consolations which are in Jesus, His redeeming love, and His atoning sacrifice, as well as His light, life and power, now revealed in the hearts of the children of men, to turn them from darkness unto light, to create a

clean heart and renew a right spirit within them. This is the religion we profess; if we walk inconsistently, unmindful of prayer and watchfulness, condemnation must rest upon us.

21*st*. Took tea with a poor family; I believe the life of pure religion binds them together; and we were refreshed in the sense hereof, though they are among the lowly ones, having little of this world's goods.

Ninth month 3*d*, *First-day*. A day of much exertion. In the morning meeting there was an earnest pleading with those of our religious Society, that the light, the life, and the power of godliness might shine, with increasing brightness, among us; that our upright, conscientious dealing in all our concerns, our consistency and genuine plainness, throughout our life and manners, might show forth to others that we were taught in the school of Christ. In the afternoon, many of the neighbors sat with us, when the universality of the mercy and love of our Almighty Father was feebly set forth.

11*th*. Preparing to leave my kind friends here, with the intention of holding a meeting at Hinckley. I was favored with an opportunity for freely communicating, to a young medical man, some impressions on my mind, which appeared to be well received; this was an unexpected relief, and confirmed

me in the persuasion that it is well to wait, in the patient belief, that for every right thing there is a right time.

12*th.* Favored with quietness, in looking towards my departure hence; and before leaving had an opportunity of religious retirement with the servants, to my satisfaction. I feel for servants.

13*th.* Ann Heaford kindly accompanied me to the Crown, at Hinckley. She has long been acquainted with the landlady of this large, well-regulated establishment, who seemed to consider it a privilege to spend part of the evening with us.

14*th.* We also had her company at our Scripture reading, after breakfast, to our comfort. Some sober people attended the meeting, and our religious principles, as founded on the gospel tidings of life and salvation, through Jesus Christ, were in measure set forth. After parting from my friends in tenderness of spirit, I came to Coventry, having accomplished my engagement.

Thus closed the labors of this devoted servant, as far as regards travelling in the work of the ministry; and here also ends her own diary; but, as long as she was able to pen an occasional memorandum, and to correspond with her friends, the effusions of her heart and pen gave undoubted proof of her growth

in grace, while the genuine fruits of the Spirit were abundantly brought forth in her consistent, humble, daily walk.

In the early part of 1828, Mary Capper visited her friend, Sarah Lamley, at Tredington; and about the 14th of First month went to Warwick, where she found her long-loved friend, Hannah Evans, much indisposed, and concluded to remain with her for a time. It proved to be to the conclusion of her course. They were permitted many times of much enjoyment together, during H. Evans' decline, partaking of the sweets of true Christian friendship and love. While there, Mary Capper heard of the death of a friend to whom she was much attached, respecting which event she wrote to R. and E. C. as follows:—

WARWICK, *First month 25th*, 1828.

MY KIND FRIENDS:—On all occasions I witness your prompt exertions and affectionate desires to serve and gratify me. What shall I render for the continuation of mercies which I consider as flowing from a far purer source than any good in me! I wrestle in the spirit of prayer, that a thankful heart may crown every blessing so graciously bestowed. The details respecting our late endeared friend have been perused with no common feelings, the thoughts of my heart have been night and day occupied on the

solemn subject. O! that ten thousand times ten thousand may be gathered to the standard of the Christian faith, the faith in which this, our highly-favored friend, lived and died, in the glorious hope of salvation, through Christ Jesus, who shed His blood for sinners! To see how a Christian can die is a privilege; but to die the death of a Christian, clothed with the light and life of our Mediator and Advocate with the Father, O how glorious!

In a memorandum made at Warwick, Mary Capper says, respecting Hannah Evans: "I was favored with strength to attend my beloved friend in the last conflict of nature, which was suffering in the extreme, from sickness, etc., so that I was thankful when it ceased. She died on the 13th of Second month, 1828; and although I have to mourn the painful void, I am thankful too for the retrospect of our precious union and fellowship."

CHAPTER XI.

FEVER AT ACKWORTH SCHOOL — ILLNESS OF MARY CAPPER — LETTERS.

AN awful visitation of fever was permitted to visit Ackworth school, in the year 1828. Many who attended at the general meeting held there that year were made partakers of the affliction. A lovely young woman took the infection, and being soon after on a visit at the house of John Backhouse, of Darlington, who married a niece of Mary Capper, she died there, after about twelve days illness. The children of this family had also taken the complaint at Ackworth, and while they were struggling with the fever, Mary Capper wrote as follows to her beloved relatives: —

BIRMINGHAM, *Ninth month 5th*, 1828.

MY DEAR NIECE: — Yesterday I received the affecting account of your trials; my own sink in the scale, as of minor weight, save only, as in some sort, they fit my heart and spirit to enter into sympathy with the afflicted. O! how sweet and confirming

when the young Christian believer, thus called away by the Lord at the early dawn of the day, can emphatically testify her only trust, her hope and her joy, to be in a Redeemer, a Saviour from sin and its condemnation; how this encourages us to press forward, though we may mourn the privation! The dear friends who have been bereaved may allowably indulge a tender sorrow, but I hope they will be comforted by the evidence of their dear child being safely landed. For you and your children, affecting as the event has been, and painful as is the uncertainty which still rests on the future, my faith points to the Rock of our salvation, trusting that the sustaining arm of Divine help will be underneath, in the trials of each succeeding day. Your dear Ann, in her weak, low and suffering state, with sorrow around, may prove a favored scholar in the school of Christ, her Redeemer. This sickness, not being unto death, may be to the manifestation of the power and glory of God.

Early in the year 1830, Mary Capper went to Coventry, where she was detained by a lingering illness. While there, she again addressed her nephew and niece in allusion to the death of their beloved child, which occurred while they were absent in a milder but foreign clime.

To J. and K. B.

Coventry, *Second month 4th*, 1830.

I should not now, perhaps, call to mind your days of sorrow, in the bereavement, and in the deposit of the remains of your beloved child among strangers; but, with you my dear relatives, I have a grateful remembrance of the mercy mixed with the dispensation, by that gracious Being who fitted and emancipated the soul of the young Christian for heaven. I seem gently impressed to communicate the language which arose in my heart, on reading thy testimony, my dear niece, corroborated by others who knew something of the life and manners of your precious child; the language still arises with freshness, Happy, happy spirit! so early released from a mortal tabernacle. May we not say, favored to know comparatively little of life's bitters, and spared the many conflicts which, in the allotment of unerring Wisdom, the wrestling spirit has to endure, in life's protracted, lengthened span. But who shall say to the righteous Judge of the whole earth, What doest Thou? O! for a calm and quiet mind to live by faith, a simple faith that asks not why or wherefore, nor requires sensible tokens, but receives the transient gleams of good, from the most excellent Glory, with deep reverence and gratitude. This is what my

spirit presses after, not as having attained, but I dare not halt, through unbelief. Your lonely situation, in a foreign land, may be blessed; you and your dear children may seek and find, by patient waiting for it, the refreshment which cometh from the presence of the Lord.

On the 29th of the Third month, Mary Capper made the following memorandum:—

"I have had so much fever as greatly to reduce my strength, and am still nearly confined to my bed and chamber. This is a trying dispensation, though made comparatively easy by many mercies; let me gratefully acknowledge favors received!"

About this time she addressed these lines to the friends where she was staying:—

To J. and S. C.

While resident under their roof, in much bodily weakness.

Coventry, *Third month*, 1830.

As an individual incorporated into the Society of Christian believers, denominated Friends or Quakers, not by education nor much familiar intercourse with any of them, not in my minority, but in more advanced years of my life; and having seen, with serious observation, it may be rather more variety of scenes

and manners than falls to the lot of every private person, I may say, that although I was ignorant and as easily led into folly as my associates, brought up in the same habits and dissipations, there were times when I was led, in deep thoughtfulness, to query with myself, What is a profession of religion? Having, at an early age, gone through the forms of what is called our National Church, and with reverence partaken of the outward and visible sign of faith in the blood of Christ, as an atoning sacrifice, ofttimes it arose in my mind, What has this done for me? Does the inward and spiritual grace subdue my evil propensities, and direct my steps into a path of circumspection and self-denial, consistent with the promises made for me in my unconscious infancy, and afterwards made binding, on my own responsibility, as I came of age to understand the nature and import of the engagement? I was aware that the ceremony was but a shadow of the substantial good.

I simply relate my own experience, implicating none; 'to our own master, we must stand or fall.' Without a laborious investigation of the opinions of the various denominations of Christians, but not without sacrifices, hindrances and discouragements, by little and little, not rashly, but after mature deliberation, in simple obedience to apprehended duty, I attended the religious meetings of Friends. To

me, solemn and reverential was that stillness, that silence, which seemed to hush every thought. I believe, that in this still calm, there is a renewal of spiritual strength to be known; yea! an enlargement of spiritual understanding, in communion with the Father of Spirits, which surely is true, spiritual worship. Thus, as an individual, I was led step by step, and found no difficulty in comprehending the ground and consistency of adopting plainness of speech, behavior and apparel; all seemed consonant with apostolic counsel, evangelic doctrine, and the example of the early Christian converts. A corruption of language and of manners has crept in, and is adopted by many Christian professors, in the present day. The Society of Friends having seen this, and being gathered in early times as a 'people turned to a pure language,' I marvel not at their setting a cautious guard against innovations.

A friend to consistency, though no dictator,

MARY CAPPER.

N. B. It has been remarked that the Romans were particularly careful to preserve the purity of their language. The state itself, it seems, thought it a subject so worthy of attention, that no innovation was allowed, in their public acts, without permis-

sion. Seneca gives it as a certain maxim, that when a false taste in style or expression prevails, it is a sign of corruption of morals in the people. (See Pliny's Letters, Book the First.) Why not apply this to our present instructions?

To K. B.

BIRMINGHAM, *Second month 14th*, 1831.

My much-loved niece! perhaps never being in more sweet union than at this day; having our senses exercised to discern good and evil, through that measure of mercy which has not left us to perish in ignorance or unbelief. Since I last wrote to thee, I have been almost a prisoner, from debility and loss of appetite. I was nearly ready to conclude that the remaining springs of natural life were gently wearing away; but a childlike, cheerful confidence kept my spirit calm and undisturbed. O! what shall I say of the free mercy that thus sustains me in lively faith and hope, not for any dedication or faithfulness in me. Ah! no; I am a poor weak child, an unprofitable servant, if ever I have done ought of service in our holy Saviour's house. Mercy is my only plea for favor here, and for acceptance hereafter. Again my bodily vigor is a little revived; it is the great Creator's will, so may it be to His gracious purpose. I dare not foster a will of my own, knowing that I

am weak and blind. The religious prospect of your kinsman, James Backhouse, his affectionate mother, his dear bereft children, are subjects of much interest; but all centres in the will of God. We may rest in gospel promises, whatever is given up for the sake of fulfilling this requiring; but what could be the happiness of a Christian in disobedience, though possessed of houses, lands and kindred; yea, of all that this world could give?

To the Same.

Birmingham, *Fourth month 7th*, 1832.

On the eleventh of this month, if my life be lengthened to that morning, I shall have seen the end of seventy-seven years. I still feel as a child, depending upon a tender Father's daily mercies; upon Him who has taken my earthly parents to Himself, I assuredly believe. O! the goodness and mercy that follows their children, yea, I doubt not their children's children. My dear mother was a woman of prayer, private prayer; the remembrance is precious to this day; in my early days her influence led me to bow at the footstool of mercy, at least often to retire in secret; and in some favored seasons, I had to shed sweet tears of tenderness, arising from the desire to be good, for I was aware of evil in my heart. Who can set forth the compas-

sion which has followed me, and does yet help, teach and comfort me! that has united me to a people whose genuine religious principles satisfy every faculty of my soul, and are my strong consolation, with hope in a Redeemer's love and power; even that He will complete His glorious work, and own me among His ransomed ones.

MARY CAPPER.

To S. H.

Twelfth month 18*th*, 1832.

DEAR S. H.: — Thou art very often in my affectionate thoughts; and this morning more especially, as my heart was tendered before the Lord, I thought of thee, with something like the interest of a Christian mother. It is obvious that thy health is precarious, a consideration that must be trying to a young man, in the opening day of human life, with the prospect of a settlement, as to a maintenance. But, dear Samuel, the Power that mars these prospects, can provide better things, for His children and people, though seen through a glass darkly. Bear in mind, that however kind, and even amiable, any may be by nature, there must be a change of heart experienced, termed in Scripture a new birth, or new spiritual creation, through the secret operation of Divine Grace in the soul. My measure of expe-

rience disposes me to feel tenderly for those in whom this work is begun, because I am aware that it must be carried forward through humiliations and close provings and searchings of heart. Nature has her strongholds; but be not discouraged though the triumph of Grace be a great work. The Divine Power is above every other power, and can complete as well as begin that which is our sanctification. I know there are times when our faith is so weak that we can scarcely read and understand the Scriptures; this is no new thing; our prayers too may seem unavailing, and clouds of thick darkness may appear to envelope us; but we must persevere in earnest, wrestling prayer, though it may only be with sighs, and conflict unutterable. And dear Samuel, I would say, enter into no disputations.

Thy affectionate friend,

MARY CAPPER.

TO JAMES BACKHOUSE, THEN IN AUSTRALIA.

BIRMINGHAM, *Fifth month* 30*th*, 1834.

MY VALUED FRIEND J. B.: — I have sometimes been privileged to see extracts from thy letters to thy dear relatives, etc.

The Good Shepherd knoweth the right time and place, when and how, to feed the scattered flock. He

goeth before, and leadeth the blind in a way they know not, but of His own preparing.

All this, and much more, is well known to thee; I may add to you, dear dedicated servants! I am personally a stranger to thy companion, G. W. Walker, but I feel no separation in the best desires of my heart, that the universal Father of mankind, to whom we are reconciled through faith in Jesus Christ, the atonement for sin, the Saviour of the poor contrite sinner, who has no other hope of salvation, may continue to bless you. May He increase our true faith, so that we may avoid all doubts and vain wranglings; simple obedience seems to me much wanting among religious professors.

It is very gratifying that thou rememberest me in the bond of Christian affection; often, very often, do I think of thee, especially in my solitary sitting, in my own apartment. When I call to mind thy report of your favored retirements, I seem in some imperfect measure, gathered by the One, eternal Power, to the same footstool of Mercy where you are so eminently favored and comforted — brought, as it were, into the bosom of your own dear absent friends — pouring forth the spirit of prayer, renewing your spiritual confidence, and afresh resigning all! This is the Lord's doing, and He is greatly to be praised.

I cannot but smile, my Christian brother, when thou designatest me "The ancient friend;" though it is true I have lived days and years not a few (fourscore years!), yet, believe me, I feel myself a very child; having to learn a new lesson every day, and to be thankful if the evening bring no condemnation for wilful omission, or any other cause; also that the morning light again arises with renewed mercies.

My health, though never robust, is sufficient for the exertions required; my spirits cheerful; all my wants supplied, and crowned with calm content. What can a Christian, drawing to the close of time, desire more; save to press forward, to the mark for the prize at the end of the race. Accept the simple, sincere love of

MARY CAPPER,

In old England; loved, though not faultless.

To M. S.

BIRMINGHAM, *Sixth month 22d*, 1834.

Thy affectionate partiality will peruse what is now sent with indulgence. I have not made any particular remark respecting joining the Society unto which I at this day consider it an unspeakable favor to be united. The religious principles professed by us, in their purity, as set forth in the Scriptures,

which testify of Jesus, born of a virgin, as foretold, to bruise the head of the serpent, yea, manifested in the flesh, and dying to redeem the fallen race of Adam, and to cast up a new and holy way of access to God the Father — these principles have been, and are still from time to time, so far opened to my spiritual understanding, that my heart is at rest. As to the result of what conviction has wrought in my life and manners, since united in your favored fellowship, my familiar friends must testify. I can only add, that I am bound in gratitude to acknowledge the gentle hand of Mercy that has guided me hitherto, and joined me in strong affection to the Society, and satisfied my seeking mind as to the genuine gospel principles of salvation.

MARY CAPPER.

It is probably the following series of reflections to which Mary Capper alludes in the foregoing letter, as they bear date about this time.

BIRMINGHAM, *Sixth month*, 1834.

After a considerable lapse of time, now in the eightieth year of my age, yet a sojourner and a pilgrim, pressing forward as not having attained all that my soul longeth after, I have this testimony to bear. Being lively, active and volatile in my early years, I account it not one of the least of many mercies that

my natural frame was feeble, and that sometimes I was much reduced by sickness. At these seasons, O! marvellous mercy! I was favored with much tenderness of spirit, and shed secret, soothing, precious tears, in an indescribable sense that God was very good, and that He saw me; and I think I did breathe the prayer that I might not be left to my own guidance. When sin and sinfulness were set before me, in the times of my folly, and I felt not the sweet, gentle balm of our Heavenly Father's favor, I did inwardly mourn, and did ignorantly, if not sinfully, wish that I had never been born. For many years, under a variety of outward changes or events, the secret, progressive work (may I not say, the genuine power of pure religion) was preparing the way for clearer views respecting the soul's salvation. In these babe-like days, whatever I found to obstruct daily prayer — lowly supplication at the throne of mercy — seemed in my view sinful, and must be overcome. Verily I have found it, and I do still find it, a wrestling warfare! The new birth is a marvellous work; a complete spiritual creation, with all things new, is not wrought by the reasoning powers of the natural man. God the Father reveals the Son in us, as the Light, the Life and the Way; and gives us power to believe in Him also as the atoning sacrifice for sin, whereby we have access to

a reconciled God and universal Father. This spiritual view of salvation, as set forth in the Scriptures, and abundantly testified by the faithful of former generations — this atoning Sacrifice, this Way of redemption (begun, carried on, and perfected for me and in me) is the rock and ground of my Christian faith, and of my hope of acceptance, when this mortal shall put on immortality. My simple, yet reverent testimony is to the marvellous love of God, in Christ Jesus, as the guide of youth, and the staff of lengthened years, to those who acknowledge Him in all their ways. My heart rests in the belief that these will not be left to perish through ignorance. Obedience is the test of our sincerity. Acknowledge God in all thy ways, and He will direct thy steps aright, from youth to old age.

MARY CAPPER.

To K. B.

BIRMINGHAM, *Eighth month 27th*, 1834.

MY MUCH-LOVED NIECE AND RELATIVES:— Shall I meet you with this letter, in the favored shades of a father's planting! as I have understood that your annual retreat is among trees cultivated by a parent's hand. Whether this may reach you there or not, something alive within me, better than naughty self, seems, as it were, to unite with your

contrited spirits. The Saviour's gentle, sweet, marvellously kind, and feeling language of invitation to His faithful followers, presents, as so beautifully applicable, encouraging and consoling, that I think I must refer to it, namely, "Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest awhile!" I can hardly forbear to copy a few lines from a beautiful comment on these words: —

"Gladly we catch the tender sound,
Which bids us come and rest awhile;
Come, breathe with me the desert air!
Come, breathe to God the secret prayer!
We come! we come! the harass'd soul
Longs to escape this war of words,
The clouds of care which round us roll,
And rest with thee, thou Lord of lords!
And once again, the bark refit,
Ere we the quiet haven quit!"

My own "dear little home," as thou so justly termest it, is a prepared place of rest for me. No human contrivance or foresight could have so provided for my ease and accommodation; no anxious cares, no daily solicitudes, which press with even lawful weight, in many situations; and what shall I say? reverence and humbling contrition clothe my spirit. Language would fail me to tell of the lowly calm, wherein my thoughts are fixed on the mercy which has followed me from my childhood to this

day. In my lowest estate I have the anchor of hope, and dare not cherish unbelief, nor unprofitably dwell on things too high for my present comprehension. Even my very weakness proves an exercise of faith and patience. These things I write, not so much for your instruction, as to signify that we are fellow-contenders for the end of our faith — the salvation of our souls.

I mark thy observation on the too frequent and familiar mention of the name of the blessed Saviour, both in public and private. Through faith in this name, my belief is that we shall be saved; but the solemn admonition sometimes rises before me, "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." — O! I long to depart from all iniquity; this is a marvellous work of the Lord's beginning, carrying on, and perfecting.

MARY CAPPER.

CHAPTER XII.

DEATH OF HER BROTHERS JOHN AND JAMES — REFLECTIONS — EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS, ETC., FROM 1835 TO 1838.

On the Fluctuation of Thoughts.

Reflections, dated *First month*, 1835.

It has a little opened to my understanding, that as involuntary thoughts are not at our command, we are only responsible as we willingly cherish, and bring them into action. Secret evil suggestions, which we cannot prevent, arising probably from the yet-permitted power of an unsanctified spirit, are not our thoughts, so long as they are a grief and burden to our hearts; and truly they are humiliating, permitted doubtless in order to humble us, and to show us what yet remains of the unrenewed, evil nature, or it is possible, that after having measurably experienced, yea! testified, to the power and efficacy of redeeming Love, we might be tempted to conclude that the great work of sanctification was complete, and thus be lulled into a false rest, and forget, or neglect, the important injunction, "Watch and pray!"

Memorandum, *Third month 4th*, 1835.

This morning's post brought the affecting tidings, that my dear brother James Capper died in London; he was a dearly-loved, kind brother.

To M. S.

Birmingham, *Third month 12th*, 1835.

My kind Friend:—Thy unfeigned sympathy is truly cordial to me; also thy kindness in sending the lovely harbingers of spring, which now adorn my apartment and cheer me. I thought, as I separated them (and now think with a sigh of tender sadness), could my beloved brother James have entered my room, he would have admired their beauties, and said, with his usual courtesy, "And how nicely sister Mary has arranged them!" Ah! how memory brings to mind his gentleness in early life, his patience with my untowardness; and in maturer days, his liberality in pleading my cause, as being of an age to judge for myself respecting the most acceptable way of worshipping God. I do not remember ever to have heard an unkind word from his lips, or a harsh censure, on any occasion. My precious brother was, for a season, deeply humbled under a sense of his unworthiness; although he had preached Christ, as the Saviour of sinners, he feared that he had not done all that he might have done for those

under his care. I have not yet received full particulars, as the survivors have been occupied in the removal of the body to Wilmington, where he had long been known as a father and a Christian counsellor. But I have not a doubt regarding the spirit, redeemed and sanctified by a Saviour's love and power; being stripped of every rag of self-righteousness, it will be clothed in the fine linen, clean and white. This is my hope and consolation for myself and my dear friends. I do feel these privations, in my lengthened life; yet I should be an ungrateful receiver of continued mercies and privileges, if a murmuring or discontented thought were cherished in my heart. Thy kind correspondent brings my mouth to the dust, so to speak. O! if a spark of genuine good desire has ever been kindled, through so weak an instrument, the praise belongs to a higher Power!

Farewell, my dear friend! with all whom the Father of mercies has given thee.

Thus subscribes thy affectionate friend,

MARY CAPPER.

TO THE SAME.

Fourth month 17*th*, 1835.

The changeable weather is unfavorable to my frail tabernacle; fourscore years is no short period, but

marvellous are the gentle dealings; the wearing down is gradual, without any violent dilapidation; but with mild warnings, the great and merciful Lord of all is pleased to instruct me. My prayer is, "Teach me Thyself." Yea, Lord! permit me to be numbered with the children who are taught of Thee, as an aged disciple, sitting at thy feet, with my mouth in the dust; only in favored times, if it may so be, in my feeble way, setting forth thy condescending goodness toward thy rational creation, formed for immortality and glory. Thus, my long-valued friend, I have desired to be led in a plain path, from my early years; far from disputation, or speculation on things too high for me, but in simple obedience; and through the vicissitudes of my long life, I have been favored with a measure of inward tranquillity, a little foretaste of that peace which this world cannot give, but which is all of mercy.

MARY CAPPER.

Memorandum.

Received intelligence of the final close of my dear brother, John Capper, the eldest of our large family; the remaining links of the chain are now only two — my youngest brother and myself. My dear brother John died on the 26th of the Fourth month, 1835.

To E. S.

Fifth month 9th, 1835.

My oft-remembered young friend, and fellow-probationer, in a land of pits and snares! I wish to give thee a prompt assurance that I have read thy last communication with very tender feeling and interest. If my experience can avail anything for thy help and encouragement, I would say, fret not thyself at the present strife of words! It is nothing new. Controversies and strange voices have existed ever since the fall of man, disobedience having marred the divine image. Enduring mercy, in tender compassion, made a new covenant, in order to redeem mankind, according to the Scriptures, which testify that the Son of God was manifested in the flesh — a body prepared of the Father; this He laid down, as a sacrifice for the sins of the world; suffering, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God. And in His spiritual appearance, He is made known to the simple, obedient believer, who will not follow the voice of the stranger; for the voice of the stranger he knows not.

As sheep then of the Good Shepherd's fold, may we, my beloved young friend, press into this safe enclosure, and quietly leave all controversy to those whose food it is. Cultivate inward stillness, that

thou mayst be favored to know the secret teaching of the Holy Spirit. Meddle not with argument. What comes to thy ear, unsought, bear patiently; guard against excitement; wrestle in prayer, both for thyself and others, for strength, if in the right, still in the right to stay; if not, that heavenly Wisdom may teach the better way.

MARY CAPPER.

TO J. AND S. GRUBB.

Fifth month 15th, 1835.

YE DEAR LABORERS: — Be faithful unto death! There is a rest, unpolluted by the strife of words. Controversy has no place in the heavenly city. As one drawing nigh to the end of time, who has indeed been tenderly dealt with, I turn from the strange voices of the present day, and intermeddle not. Yet I think I do a little enter into feeling, and Christian sympathy with the faithful, exercised servants, who have to preach the cross of Christ. O! may a Redeemer's love and power keep you, dear friends, and every deeply-proved, tried mind, from the tender youth to the aged sojourner on this side the promised land, that ye faint not, nor grow weary in the Lord's work.

MARY CAPPER.

To J. and K. B.

Birmingham, *Fifth month*, 1835.

My Beloved Relatives:—I contemplate you in London, with divers others, as disciples, or learners from day to day at the feet of Jesus, in the good old school, with your mouths in the dust, while some may be busy around you, with a zeal to do well, and to serve the Lord. Gentle, yet impressive, was the Saviour's rebuke, "Martha! Martha! one thing is needful!" O! blessed privilege, to sit at the Redeemer's feet, to know His voice, to learn of Him, in the depth of humiliation, to come unto Him of whom the inspired Scriptures do amply testify. My faith increases in the promises as they stand recorded there; and in the gracious influence of the Holy Spirit, to lead out of all error and into all truth. O! if we had not a merciful High Priest, touched with a feeling of our infirmities, and acquainted with our temptations, what indeed should we do! My spirit is revived by a consoling hope that these clouds and storms, by shaking, to the very foundation, all that can be shaken, will work together for a good end, yet but dimly seen. And I do hope that no unprofitable dismay will obstruct, in any heart, the benefit of the yearly meeting. Of course it is not for me, a solitary one, to presume upon my feelings; nevertheless

I may state, that in some favored moments of stillness — in a quiet not to be formed by human skill, and under a secret sense of that Power that brought me among you as a religious body, and that is still the mercy of the present hour, I have had a belief granted me, that this annual gathering will, at times, be favored with the overshadowing of divine love and mercy.

MARY CAPPER.

Seventh month, 1835.

Marvellous is the condescending mercy that has brought me hitherto, through a wilderness of pits and snares; and in my old age, provided all things for my comfort; and above all, settled my heart in a peaceful state; no more tossed with floating opinions, but watching, waiting and praying to be perfected and fitted for the kingdom of heaven. The Lord's own works can alone praise Him!

Had I the pen of a ready writer, or the gift of an evangelist, what could I write more impressive than what has been already written and stands upon sacred record! viz., "Do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God. Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation." All the wit and learning of the most learned men can never equal the precepts of Scripture.

To S. L., Jr.

Birmingham, *Ninth month 21st*, 1835.

Dear Sarah: — It seems long since we had any communication. Months have passed away, not without solemn events and changes, within the circle of our own kindred; so, at least, it has been permitted to me, to experience link after link to be broken.

My eldest brother died a few weeks after the decease of my dear brother James, who was educated for a preacher in the established mode of worship, and lived, as a pastor, fifty years at Wilmington, in Sussex, where he was beloved and lamented. In life and in death, all his hope of salvation rested on the Rock of Ages, which Rock is Christ: his language, in his illness, was, "None but Christ! none but Christ! I wish to embrace Him, in all His fulness, to be swallowed up in His love!" The enemy of souls endeavored to persuade him (says his watchful, affectionate daughter) that he would never attain to what he so earnestly desired, viz., a fitness to meet Christ; but he said, "The waves of the sea are mighty, but the Lord on high is mightier!" and at times, after a sore conflict, he would break forth into praises. He was much in prayer for himself and for others; petitioning his heavenly Father to look upon

him, and to have pity; often repeating, "Mercy is all my plea." In his dying moments, being asked if he was comfortable in the assurance that Jesus would receive him, he replied, "Yes;" and with his usual tenderness, added, "and you too!" These were his last words.

I hope this little extract, so interesting to me, will not be intrusive. I wish to convey, as far as expression can do it, my very dear love to thy mother, who, with my own soul, longs to be found at the mercy seat, waiting for the fulness of redeeming love and power.

MARY CAPPER.

Fragment on Prayer, addressed to a Friend.

Eleventh month, 1835.

With diffidence, as ever becomes me, I am willing to attempt expressing my ideas on the subject alluded to in our late conversation. I am aware that my understanding is very limited, but I think my simple views are not irreconcilable with precept and example in the inspired records. Can there be anything more imperative than the command, "Watch and pray!" or any language more sweet and encouraging than "Pray unto thy Father, who seeth in secret?"

Doubtless Christians should live in the spirit of

prayer. "It is the Christian's vital breath;" and marvellous is the privilege, unto this day and hour, of communion with the Almighty Power, God over all, who breathed that breath of life whereby we became living souls! By the same Almighty Power, we are kept from the path of destruction. Sweet is the inviting language of our Redeemer, who has cast up a new and consecrated way, by which we have access to the mercy seat. "When ye pray," said He, "say, Our Father!" Glorious privilege! that while clothed with human nature, feeling and mourning our omissions and our commissions, we may "kneel before the Lord our Maker," in prostration of body, soul and spirit! Although utterance may fail, there is an availing sigh, a tear of contrition, and a Spirit, better than our own, helping our infirmities! I allude not to any forms, but to the real, humble breathings of the soul, athirst for the living God.

MARY CAPPER.

TO A RELATION.

Third month 4th, 1836.

The secret language and aspiration of my spirit is, O! that our youth, entering the field of faith and of responsibility, O! that they may be kept from the strange disputations of this day. But why think it strange? Look at the history of mankind from the

fall of Adam; disobedience has marked every succeeding generation; subtle device, or open rebellion, has drawn aside thousands, and continues, in various ways, to allure and deceive the children of men. The natural, uncontrolled, active mind delights in doing something that shall appear goodly; yea, can make sacrifices in its own will and way, and is gratified in self-complacency, and it may be applause; yea, in external acts of religious worship. My long life and observation, tossed and sifted as I have been, have given me a measure of experience in the delusions of self. O! how different, how widely different, from the lowly, humble waiting at the feet of Jesus, the highest Teacher, as with our mouths in the dust; feeling our own impotency, our own blindness! Here is subjugation indeed, bearing the true cross. Ah! my dear, say not in thine heart, "Who shall show us any good?" who shall ascend, or who shall descend, to bring our best Teacher? Believe me, He is nigh thee; the living Word! writing the new covenant on the tablet of thy heart. Believe and obey this, and thou wilt be led gently along, as thou canst bear it. When we are faithful in the little, the way is made for farther manifestations of the Divine will concerning us. Avoid speculations, and vainly exercising thyself in things too high for thee. If I know anything of true peace, it

is in simple, child-like obedience to the still, small voice of the Good Shepherd, who instructs the lambs and sheep of His fold; a stranger's voice they will not know nor follow.

This gracious, enduring mercy was the Guide of my youth, turning my steps into the narrow way; and it is the stay and the staff of my old age; and never did I more fully appreciate what I believe to be the genuine principles of the Society to which I am conscientiously united, than at this day.

Sacrifices not a few have been called for, but not one which is not doubly repaid by sweet peace. Not one painful accusation is permitted to trouble me; thankfulness and cheerfulness clothing my spirit, in the midst of great reduction of bodily strength.

Though I know not the heart of a parent, I feel much for the rising generation; if there was not faith in an over-ruling Power, our poor thoughts might trouble, if not overwhelm us; for what a shifting day is this, among professors of religion! our own little favored band not exempt. There seems a prevailing mania, a strife of words and of strange voices; But the Good Shepherd knoweth His own sheep, and they follow Him.

To J. and K. B.

Birmingham, *Fourth month 5th*, 1836.

The recent intelligence of your devoted kinsman, James Backhouse, and his companion, with satisfactory accounts from Daniel Wheeler, are consoling evidences that the universal Father still regards his rational creation as one family, however circumstances may differ; our limited capacities see dimly, and we too often lightly esteem our own mercies. With reverence, at this day, I am ready to testify, that although the surrender of dear, very dear parents (for I was prohibited the paternal roof), and of a strong, heart-engaged attachment, led me indeed in a way that I knew not, yet I was favored with an internal calm that could not argue the matter; to all inquiries, I could only answer, that my peace of mind seemed to depend upon simple obedience. And still, in this dependent, child-like state, humbled by a sense of my evil propensities, which brings me to the foot of the cross, I can now say that every sacrifice made in obedience is rewarded an hundred-fold; infinite, adorable mercy crowning the poor worthless offerings of His children, with the assurance that He accepts them, and

that Divine Grace shall be with them, in life and in death.

It seems to me of great importance that there should be no self-complacency, nor creaturely glorying, but true self-reduction, bearing the cross.

MARY CAPPER.

To M. S.

Fourth month 12th, 1836.

A bountiful Creator continues to allure us to love, obey and praise Him. Had I the pen of a ready writer, had I the gift of an evangelist, my theme should be, Praise the Lord! Let everything that hath breath praise Him! The way to praise that Almighty Power, who has formed His rational creation for immortality and glory, is obedience. He has not left us without an internal witness, to manifest our errors and our sins, and to point and to lead into safe paths. I assuredly believe that there was a consciousness of good and evil, even before the Gospel dispensation, which is the fulfilment of prophecy in a Saviour incarnate. Glad tidings indeed! Glory to God in the highest! Peace on earth; good-will to men! ratified by a new covenant, written in the heart, and confirmed by Scripture testimony, that Jesus Christ came into

the world to save us from our sins — to redeem us from all iniquity. What can be more convincing! Our restless wanderings arise from the neglect of watching unto prayer, and daily bearing the subduing cross.

MARY CAPPER.

TO HANNAH WATKIN.

BIRMINGHAM, *Seventh month 1st*, 1836.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND: — It sometimes seems marvellous in my view, that our natural life is lengthened for weeks, months, and it may be years, after being brought as it were to the brink of the grave, looking for the salvation of the soul, through the redeeming love and power of the Saviour, who was crucified for sinners. No other name do we own, or profess to believe, can save us. This I consider as the unchangeable foundation of genuine Quakerism; and it is to be accompanied by a consistency of conduct, not to be controverted, agreeably to the Scriptural doctrine and precepts left upon record by the Highest Teacher, and to the example and testimony of holy men of old. As far as my spiritual understanding has been enlightened, this is what I apprehend to be Truth. Secret things belong to the Lord. My belief is, that sufficient is revealed for our instruction, and that, while persevering, in

faithful obedience, we shall find that lowly, peaceful, spiritual poverty is a soul-satisfying reward. I believe it is safe, and best in the present times, to leave judgment unto the righteous Judge, as to this or that; and to take the impressive counsel, "What is that to thee? follow thou Me!" I hope not to weary thee, dear friend. I think only to add, that Christian union, love and fellowship were never more precious, nor more binding to my fellow-professors in the Society to which I have been conscientiously united for upwards of fifty years; and I am so far from being dissatisfied, that in my most favored seasons, I daily contemplate it as a mercy. Farewell, affectionately,

MARY CAPPER.

To ——.

BIRMINGHAM, *Second month 29th*, 1838.

MY FELLOW-PROBATIONER: — For whom I continue to feel an affectionate Christian interest. I think thy letter would not have lain so long unacknowledged, had I anything to offer that could minister availing instruction. My limited experience, however, leads me to cherish tender sympathy with every one who is convinced of the sinfulness of sin, and of our depravity by nature.

It is recorded in Scripture, from the Highest

authority, "A man must be born again, or he cannot see, or enter, the kingdom of heaven." This new birth, or new creation, is a blessed change of heart; all things become new; new thoughts, new desires, and new views of ourselves. I may venture to say, that it appears to me, that thy present humiliating sense of gross commissions, with thy mournful retrospect thereof, and thy turning from thy unrighteous ways, are tokens of mercy, that thou art not forsaken, or given up to hardness of heart, so long as a secret spirit of prayer, or good desire, is raised, and kept alive in thee.

Although, as yet, thou art tossed and not comforted, remember, there must be a time of trial, ere the soul can come to rest on the Rock of salvation. We are assured, that "To know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent, is life eternal." This is a knowledge too high for the natural comprehension; but we are also assured, that the grace of God, or the Holy Spirit, is given unto us to profit withal, as testified by holy men of old, and by faithful Christians, from generation to generation. The Holy Spirit, the Saviour's gift, is to this day my Comforter, carrying on, as I humbly hope, the great work of sanctification throughout, in body, soul and spirit. From my early years, I had a secret belief that religion was pure and holy, and that it led

to purity and holiness of life; and I was induced to consider that the Society of Friends manifested more consistency of manners and conduct, than was discoverable among others.

The fundamental faith of the Society in a crucified Saviour, as a Redeemer, and a reconciler to God the Father, I have never doubted; and had there been more faithful obedience to that Spirit which leads out of error, I am inclined to believe we had not been so scattered a people as we are at this day. My enfeebled state of body and mind disqualifies me from entering into argument. My peace seems to be in quietness, and in holding fast my confidence; taking a retrospective view of the way in which I have been kept and led hitherto.

With an earnest desire for the welfare of souls, for thee and thy dear family,

I remain affectionately thy friend,

MARY CAPPER.

CHAPTER XIII.

BEAUTIFUL INCIDENT — EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS — GRADUAL DECLINE — LAST ILLNESS — DEATH.

THE closing years of Mary Capper's long life present much to encourage the Christian pilgrim, when vigor of bodily health has passed, and the capacity for enjoying many desirable and lawful things of this world has so far diminished, that we are ready to say, "we have no pleasure in them;" then to be favored with brightening evidences of the coming of that day, which has the glory of perfection, is as a treasure of inestimable value.

Our beloved friend gave up in early life what was nearest and dearest to her, to enter upon the pursuit of the pearl of great price. Through the heavenly help that is ever extended to the traveller Zionward, she was enabled to press onward, and to realize the joys of God's salvation.

In the eighty-third year of her age, she writes: —

"I have abundant cause to take fresh courage, and be thankful; for a consoling hope and lowly confidence in redeeming, sanctifying Power, cheers the

pathway before me. My general health gradually improves, and my cough is abated; and how shall I describe the favor of being permitted to lie down in peace, and to take rest in safety under a protecting Power! Thus, my dear niece, I am tenderly dealt with. I go to our religious meetings once in the day; and though faith and patience be tried, the hope of finally reaping the rich harvest of promise, urges my spirit to press onward, through all that may at times cloud the beatific vision. I walk out most mornings, rising about seven o'clock; my faithful, valued hand-maiden reads portions of Scripture to me; the day is spent mostly in solitude, and closes with reading a chapter or two in the Bible, when I am early ready, and thankful to retire."

Soon after she records: —

"My spirit is relieved from a distressing exercise, which almost seemed to separate from the consolations of adoption through the Saviour. Now in a humble, lowly calm, with watchfulness unto prayer, and that contiuually, a plain path in the strait and narrow way seems set before me; turning neither to the right, nor to the left, to hear what others may say, but keeping in view what first brought my wandering feet from the broad way."

A pleasing and beautiful little incident, about this time, appears in her correspondence. A little child, five years of age, addressed to her dear aged friend this sweet note:—

"I should like to hear thee talk to me about heaven, where little children go when they are good; and if thou wilt be pleased to see me, I shall be glad to see thee; please, when will it be a suitable time?

I love thee, and am thy friend, S. K."

To this Mary Capper replies:—

"DEAR LITTLE FRIEND:—I am quite pleased with thy little letter, and am glad that thou lovest me, for I have much love for children; and I am glad when they wish to be good, and to know something about that Saviour, Jesus, of whom we read in the Bible.

When I was a little girl, I had naughty tempers. I wished to be good, and I often cried when I was alone, because I wanted to be good all at once. I was like thee, dear child, too young to understand that I must be patient and humble, and learn that Jesus Christ came into the world to save us from our sins, and our naughty tempers, and to make us gentle, patient and obedient. We cannot see the

blessed Jesus as He appeared in this world, in time past; yet His mercy, love and power are over us all; to take away our perverse dispositions, and to prepare us for heaven, that happy place where all are good, happy and blessed forever. That thou, dear S., mayst be one of those who are eternally blessed, is the affectionate desire of

Thy friend,

MARY CAPPER."

In addressing a beloved relative, she says:—

"As the end of my lengthened life draws nigh, my hope of salvation is still in the Saviour. Thy retrospect of the close of time to thy precious parents is very impressive; it is consoling to contemplate the mercy which, we have good ground to believe, prepared, and has gathered their sanctified souls into the kingdom, where sin, the root and germ of sorrow, can no more disturb, neither interrupt the undefiled rest of the ransomed of the Lord! I cherish it as a token for good, that we are brought to each other's particular remembrance in our most favored times. May we not accept it as a sweet, encouraging evidence of the Power that baptizes into one Spirit! by the 'one baptism,' which is something beyond elementary washing or dipping, or anything perishable."

At a subsequent period she writes:—

"I do desire gratefully to acknowledge the mercy that produces so much interest in what concerns my welfare. It is marvellous in my view, and in my present weak estate, I cleave to the Power that thus condescends to uphold me, and to spread the feeling of sympathy far and wide. My bodily frame is in a very debilitated state; but when the cheering sunbeams break through the mist, I almost long to be in the air, and again to be privileged to meet my fellow-Christian professors, and unite in waiting upon the Lord."

Mary Capper did not again rise much out of the state of feebleness which she here describes; but she continued to enjoy, during the remaining years of her protracted life, a comfortable degree of health, and was capable to the last of enjoying the society of her friends, to whom she ever continued to be affectionately attached.

Some of her relatives who visited her in the spring of 1840, among whom was the editor of this volume, found her in a strikingly happy and holy state of mind — a state which seems best described by the word heavenly.

FROM JAMES BACKHOUSE TO J. AND K. B.

YORK, *Second month 18th*, 1842.

MY DEAR COUSINS: — I do not recollect, that in my last, I mentioned your aged relative, Mary Capper, who appeared to me much enfeebled. She spoke of the approach of her end, as feeling an earnest desire to depart and be with her Saviour, but said that she could nevertheless say, "Not my will, but Thine be done," and that she had many comforts to be thankful for, of the least of which she was unworthy. She feelingly expressed her sense of helplessness, and of dependence on Divine support; and her heart seemed overflowing with love to her friends. She is an encouraging example of the power of religion in old age; and while her heart expands in Christian love towards all, she retains a clear and strong attachment to those views, or rather, I might more properly say, to those experiences of Christianity to which true Friends through faith have attained. I thought this little notice of your honorable relation was due to you; and should I see her no more, to her memory.

Your affectionate cousin,

JAMES BACKHOUSE.

On a subsequent occasion, James Backhouse, in writing of a call made on Mary Capper, soon after

his return from his labors abroad, makes the following observations: —

"In the course of conversation, she informed me, that she had adopted the principles of total abstinence as regards intoxicating liquors; that, though on the first mention of the subject, she had doubted its propriety, yet on reflecting upon it, and considering the numbers led away into inebriety, and that all these began their course of drunkenness by taking intoxicating liquors in what had been thought to be moderation, she came to the resolution, that no one should be able to plead her example for taking them at all. At the time she left them off, she was upwards of eighty years of age, and in the practice of taking a single glass of wine daily with her dinner; and having been for many years unable to take animal food, this glass of wine had been thought almost essential to her existence, especially as she had been accustomed to it from an early period of her life. She told me that she expected to have something to suffer, in making this change, and that she might probably have to endure a greater sense of feebleness during the remainder of her days; but the welfare of those by whom she was surrounded, and on whom her example might have some influence, she considered to be of much greater importance. On

making the trial she was, however, agreeably disappointed; for though she felt some langor for a few days, she soon became sensible of an increase of strength, and was more vigorous without the wine than she had been with it; so that she had cause to commemorate the goodness by which she had been enabled to make this little sacrifice. And I believe that her example in this respect, as well as her Christian practice exhibited in a great variety of other points, had a beneficial influence on many."

From this time to the end of her days, Mary Capper was preserved in much sweetness and liveliness of spirit, and though feeble, was generally comfortable.

Seldom has there been seen a more encouraging or animating example of old age. To the close she rejoiced in the enlargement of Zion's borders, and in the prosperity of her helpers. Her affectionate kindness and Christian regard for children was remarkable, and they in return manifested a warm love for her.

E. CADBURY TO K. B.

EDGBASTON, *Second month 5th*, 1844.

MY DEAR COUSIN:—Thy dear aunt was at meeting yesterday morning, also on fourth-day, when

she particularly wished to sit with those who had not gone to our quarterly meeting at Coventry; her company was very acceptable, and she expressed a few words, full of love to her Heavenly Father, and to all the human family. She is often favored with ability to say a little to the dear children, of whom we have a large number in this place; and her affectionate kindness to them is such, that I think there is scarcely a child but will remember her as long as they live. As she was about to leave my son's yesterday, the three little ones followed her for the parting kiss, pulling her gown, as described by Goldsmith, "To share the good man's smile." Her servant continues as attentive as ever, and I believe she has every comfort.

Mary Capper continued much in the same state during the remaining months of the year, and bore the winter's cold quite as well as her friends had anticipated, as she was now in her ninetieth year. In the Fifth month, 1845, she had a troublesome cough, yet she continued to get out, and was able to attend meetings, in which she sometimes addressed her friends in encouraging language; and on first-day, the 18th, she especially noticed the dear children in her ministry. The next day her medical attendant requested that she would remain in bed, with which

she reluctantly complied. Indeed, so unconscious was she of the extent of her own feebleness, that on the 21st she wished to be allowed to rise and go to meeting, that she might sit with the few who were gathered, many being absent at the yearly meeting. On the 22d fever increased, and her breathing became much affected, so as to alarm the kind friends who surrounded her; but, as one of them remarks, "She seemed peculiarly peaceful, and full of love and gratitude. The exclamation, 'Goodness, mercy and power!' was frequently on her lips. In the evening she took leave of the person under whose roof she resided, evidently under the idea that it might be a last farewell, expressing her desire that a blessing might attend the family for their kindness."

Previous to settling for the night, she requested her faithful attendant to read in the Scriptures to her, as usual. The 14th chapter of John came in course, which was very congenial to her feelings, and she said that she could not have heard a more beautiful chapter, exclaiming, "O! how beautiful! to go to a mansion prepared for us!" and afterwards she appeared to be fervently engaged in silent prayer. She then spoke of her unworthiness; that she had no merit of her own, but that it was all of the Lord's mercy.

During the night she was much engaged in prayer,

and the words, "O! Father!" often escaped her lips. She remarked to her servant, that she would be rewarded, for her affectionate kindness to her, both here and in heaven.

About eight o'clock in the morning of the 23d, she proposed having her knitting, and endeavored to put on her spectacles, but the powers of the frail tabernacle were failing, and she speedily and gently passed away, to enter, as we reverently believe, into that mansion prepared for her by the Saviour; where, clothed in the spotless robe of His righteousness, we humbly trust she is uttering the anthem of praise.

To her last moments, love was the covering of her spirit, and she continued to recognize her friends, and to manifest it to them. A feeling of great solemnity was over those who were privileged to be present at the close of the life of this devoted servant of the Lord, which took place about eleven o'clock in the forenoon. Having done her day's work in the day-time, she was ready to accept the gracious invitation, and to enter into the joy of her Lord!

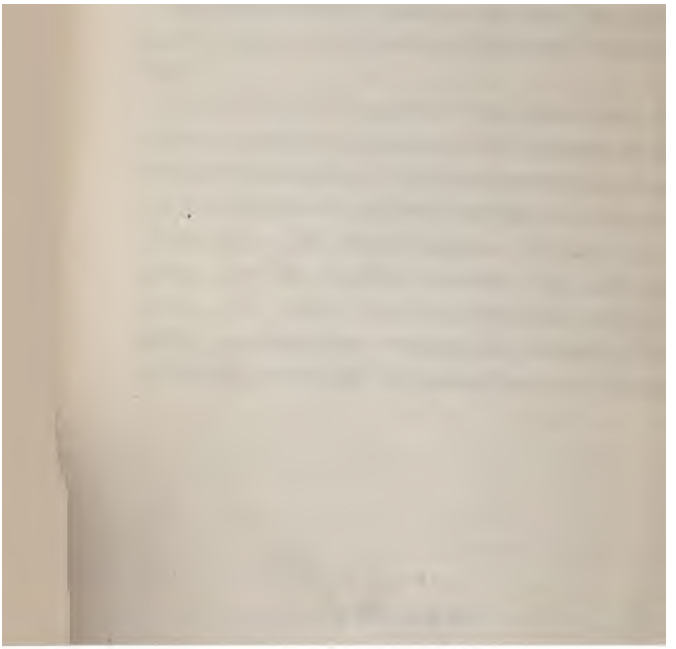
Several of the poor to whom she had long been kind, desired to be allowed to visit the remains; and one of her great nephews, who was on the spot, and who had long been an attentive and kind helper to her, remarks, that the feeling shown by these poor

neighbors proved that she had been a Dorcas among them.

The interment took place on the 1st of the Sixth month, 1845, and was a very solemn and instructive time.

In reviewing the long life of this dear friend, the mind is powerfully impressed with the truth of the Scripture declaration, "Him that honoreth me I will honor;" for how do we see it verified in every stage of her life! She sought to honor her Lord in all things, and He dignified her with His gifts and graces, and enabled her to glorify Him while on earth; preparing her, through His redeeming love and mercy, to celebrate His praise forever in Heaven.

THE END.



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